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DECEMBER 1961

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ST. IGNATIUS LOYOLA

By

ELMER O'BRIEN

SAINTS, for the most part, keep their secrets well. For every Augustine or Thérèse of Lisieux, whose words are windows through which anyone may gaze at will, there are dozens of others whose words are walls of a superlative opacity. Just such a one, splendidly secretive all these years behind walls of his own construction, is St. Ignatius Loyola.

Yet, as every schoolboy knows, there is really no staying the pens of biographers when their ink-pots are full and a market awaits. Ignorance, which perhaps should, appears rather to awaken ingenuity instead. A notably insomnious ingenuity presided at the slow creation over the centuries of the Ignatius most people know: the "soldier-saint," unlettered; slow and stiff of intellect; the exigent idealism of the impoverished nobility whence he sprang continually tilting with the windmill pragmatism of his peasant surroundings; Don Quixote de Loyola being ceaselessly nudged this way and that across the face of Europe by Providence until he founded the Company of Jesus, an ecclesiastical light-infantry of an Order military in its discipline and (innocuously) martial in its intent and ever at the ready to man each disputed barricade of the Church with the all-purpose weapon, the *Spiritual Exercises*, firmly in hand and the cry, *Ad maiorem Dei gloriam*, frenziedly in mouth. A pity that except in the imagination of hard-pressed biographers and of their readers, this Ignatius never existed. He sounds such fun.

St. Ignatius's secret today as through all those yesterdays remains his own. But today there are biographers who have not been content to remain outside his wall of words kicking their heels and cursing their fate and making, *faute de mieux*, ingenious guesses about what manner of man he might be. And of late, armed with the scholar's tools, they have effected small, venturesome breaches here and there in the wall so that today one can at least catch glimpses of the man within. One does

not, of course, see him whole. But what one does see makes it clear that St. Ignatius is quite other than ingenuity had led previous generations to believe.¹

Something of that "otherness" I would attempt to describe and discuss here, limiting myself to two of the most fascinating and hitherto unsuspected aspects of the man behind the now slowly crumbling wall: the theologian of the spiritual life and the mystic.

To begin with, he was the first because he was the second; his discoursing on God and on all things else in their relation to God, which is theology's function, was initially caused and consistently formed and deepened thereafter by his experience of God. In other words, his was a deliberate transfer from personal experience to doctrinal utterance—truly an alarmingly perilous business for anyone to engage in. The danger, of course, is that one tends to make men, made in the image of God, in one's own image. It was a danger he succeeded somehow in avoiding. How he did so may be disputed, but there is no gainsaying that he did. Thus, although they trust they bear a family resemblance to their father Ignatius, Jesuits do differ somewhat markedly; they always have; precisely to the extent that they remain his sons, they always will. Again, one need only recall how diversely hundreds of laity, priests, and nuns were formed to sanctity by him during the days when he was practically the spiritual director of Europe. It would seem that he avoided the danger usually inherent in the method because his mystical experience and the theology based upon it went so very deep, moving in an area beneath individual differences and according solidity and meaning to them all. Such at least is the conviction which will pervade these pages.

The mystical experience of St. Ignatius was of a piece from the very beginning. His own relating of an initial instance (told, as was his custom, in the third person) will serve to situate discussion:

One day, he went out of devotion to a church which stood just over a mile from Manresa. . . . The road to it runs alongside the river. On his way, occupied with his devotions, he sat down for a little while while facing the river, which ran below. As he sat

¹ I have in mind such worthy pioneers as James Brodrick, *Saint Ignatius Loyola* (London, 1956), and Hugo Rahner, *St. Ignatius Loyola: Letters to Women* (London, 1960).

there, the eyes of his understanding began to open and, without seeing any vision, he understood and knew many things, as well spiritual as those appertaining to the faith and to the realm of letters, and that with such clarity that they seemed to him things completely new. It is impossible to set out in detail all that he then understood, and the most he can say is that he received so great an enlightenment of mind that, taking together all the helps he has received from God and all the things he has learned or known during the whole course of his life, he does not think they amount to as much as he received from that one illumination. It left him with an understanding so greatly enlightened that he seemed to himself to be another man, with another mind than that which was his before.¹

This signal experience would seem to have taken place in the autumn of 1522. Already the year had been one of exceptional graces. As he lay in the diminutive Castle of Loyola, convalescing from wounds sustained defending the fortress at Pamplona in July of the previous year, he had asked that books of romance and chivalry be brought him to help pass the time. None could be found, so they brought him the four fat tomes of Ludolph the Saxon's *Life of Christ* and a Castilian translation of *The Golden Legend*. Now a veritable library on the life of Our Lord and a collection of saintly lives generously laced throughout with the legendary would not, one would think, be precisely this man's cup of tea. For this man, at thirty, was in many ways still a boy of thirteen. The fairer of the opposite sex still peopled his imagination unduly. Daydreams of large feats of prowess in which he would signalise himself (particularly in feminine eyes) jostled for attention as much as ever. But to the dreams of the boy undergoing court training at Arévalo was now added a stain, dark and disturbing, relic of the subsequent sordid exploits of the man; that would seem to be the only difference. Yet boredom did its work uncommonly well. Ignatius, "much addicted to gambling and dissolute in his dealings with women, contentious and keen about using his sword,"² found himself in spite of himself browsing from time to time in the gentle books provided him. As weeks passed, a pattern of reading and reverie formed itself. And, increasingly, the reading would

¹ Quoted in Brodrick, *Saint Ignatius Loyola*, pp. 107-108.

² The description of Ignatius at this time is provided by Juan Polanco, his secretary and companion later in life. Quoted in Brodrick, *op. cit.*, p. 45.

provide the matter of the reverie. But not always. The thought of one woman in particular, he tells us, "carried him away to such an extent that he would be wrapt up in it for two, three or four hours, without being conscious of the passage of time."¹ Yet he did find himself musing, however briefly, about St. Dominic or St. Francis and thinking that he should do such things as they. From this alternating of the sacred and the profane in his idly wandering thoughts there came, one significant day, a lesson. He enjoyed his profane thoughts, but when they passed he was left discontented and dry. He enjoyed his holy thoughts, but when they passed he continued to be filled with the joy and gaiety and lightness of spirit they had induced. This rudimentary lesson in how to distinguish the workings of good and evil influences upon one would of course, nuanced and broadened and deepened, become a valued part of the *Spiritual Exercises* in later years. But its chief value, even if one has the eventual composing of the *Exercises* solely in mind, would seem to have been this: the frivolous extrovert, gross in his spiritual ignorance, who had never apparently been properly introduced to himself, learned the worth of introspection. It was a lesson he was never to forget. Operative in every line of the acute psychology of the *Exercises* is an informed awareness of the positive role of feelings in the life of the spirit. Now, in the months which followed, he applied his lesson to good purpose as he concluded to the authentic or counterfeit coinage of such things as successive visions of Our Lady and Child, of a "very beautiful object shining with the likeness of many eyes," of the Trinity under the form of three keys of a musical instrument. He was ready, when it came, for the mystical experience upon the bank of the Cardoner.

In recalling the event thirty years later he was careful to record that it was not a vision. "Without seeing any vision, he understood and knew many things. . . ." It was an instance of Ignatian mysticism in what might be called its pure state. All other instances of which we have record had a visionary accompaniment of one sort or another which can make the interpreter's task, difficult at best, more difficult still. For mystic experience is one thing. Visions are something else again. They must be always and everywhere distinguished one from the other. But where the one ends and the other begins it would

¹ Brodrick, *op. cit.*, p. 66.

often take a Daniel come to judgment to determine. Especially is this so with mystics who, as Ignatius, are also visionaries. Great, therefore, is the historical value of his account of this one visionless occurrence, for in every other respect it is identical with every other mystic experience he is reported to have had in the years that followed. It is a description of Ignatian mysticism "in its pure state." It is, accordingly, given priority of treatment here.

What it describes as having happened that day on the bank of the River Cardoner was a direct experience of the Godhead which flooded the recipient with knowledge. It is to this "knowledge" that one should chiefly attend. It was not knowledge delimited and defined and accorded in concepts: his inability then or later to express it in so many words is sufficient indication that it was question of a direct *experience* in the order of knowing quite as that of the majority of other mystics is a direct experience in the order of loving. It was, further, knowledge that was had in an act of judgment, in an affirmation of the true which was accorded him, by Truth, in the very substance of his being. The mind boggles, I know, at anything so difficult to grasp as what is being suggested here: the occurrence of a human affirmation which was yet a "received," a "passive" act. Yet the contrarities involved are basically no different than those theology encounters in its efforts to explain the divine operation which is operative in every act of every man, and they need not detain us here. What must, however, be inquired into more closely is the level upon which this experience occurred, for to understand that is to understand both the role of the visionary in his other experiences and how those experiences could be so satisfactory a basis for his distinctive theology of the spiritual life.

The suggestion was made above that "an affirmation of the true . . . was accorded him . . . *in the very substance of his being.*" By "substance" was meant what Thomism conventionally means by the term: the abiding existential substratum of faculties, of habits, of acts in the human composite. One may call it, more descriptively, the *fundo del alma* with St. Teresa or the *Seelengrund* with Meister Eckhart; it matters little. Whatever expression is used, what one would indicate is that which is ontologically prior to, and normative of, *all* differentiations of the volitional or intellectual order. Here, where (in Thomist theory) habitual grace is received, was apparently infused that knowing affirmation.

Ignatius's direct experience of the Godhead always seems to have had its effect in these psychic deeps and nowhere else. A being of volition and intellection he was transformed there where there is no intellection but only its generic matrix. Because knowing is an existing, it is a truism that one knows as one is. Ignatius ever after knew differently because he was different ("he seemed to himself to be another man") and the basis of this new being and new knowing was the affirmation of truth which was accorded him then and thereafter.

If there is a magisterial cohesion and depth in his theology combined with a fragmentary and often disconcertingly superficial mode of expression—and there is—the reason lies in the mode of his mystic experience. He came himself to refer to it, more often than not, as being like the entry into his depths of a "white light." Think, then, of this infused act of affirmation as a lucent whiteness which contains within it all colours of the spectrum, blended, their variety imperceptible, now only a luminous oneness. Of such all-containing light, received upon a level prior to all conceptualising, there could not be in his theology anything more than scattered refractions. Yet each refraction, each reflected ray, is in harmony with every other because of the common hidden source. Hidden, unexpressed because inexpressible, the source gives coherence to what is disparately visible and, more important still, affords a dimension in depth to what appears only on surfaces.

There is always among the mystics an all but unbridgeable chasm between experience and expression. In Ignatius it was absolutely unbridgeable. Most other mystics have experienced God with the totality of their spiritual being; not only the substance of the soul but its faculties as well were suffused with His felt presence; they have in consequence been able to build a bridge of sorts from experience to expression because the basic organs of expression, the faculties, had themselves partaken of the experience. With Ignatius this was not so. Only the substance of his being was affected.

There would seem to have been two chief results from this relatively limited nature of his mystic experience: it was of almost unbroken duration throughout the last years of his life, and it was—paradoxically enough—theologically more informative than a less limited experience would have been.

It would seem to be the rare and exceptional mystic whose experience of God is practically constant. Venerable Mary of the Incarnation¹ perhaps was such a one. St. Ignatius certainly was. The ability he had of "finding God in all things" which was the admiration of his later contemporaries would seem to have been something much more than the practice he recommended to his Jesuit sons. That, however helpful and salutary, was largely based upon a theology of the *als ob*: one should accept things "as if" coming from the hands of God, one should attend the superior's will "as if" he were Christ, and so on. As is clear from the few pages of his spiritual diary that have come down to us (2 February, 1544, to 27 February, 1545), he could *experience* God's presence almost at will. All that was required was an explicit advertence which in the days recorded in the diary he could not always effect but which in subsequent years, according to the testimony of his companions, he found no difficulty in doing. What he did, it seems, was merely advert consciously and deliberately to what he was already experiencing, for to suggest that he or anyone else could have an authentic mystic experience at will is a particular nonsense we have no intention of indulging in here. And by this free advertence his awareness of what habitually he was experiencing came more sharply into focus—he "found" God. A homely example may serve to clarify the central point here. Take a young man; he is wonderfully in love; his step has a new resiliency; his eye a new brightness; all the world, which in accord with the adage loves him, is bright and gay. His happiness, so prolific in felicitous consequences whether ambulatory or oculatory or social, is habitual. He goes to sleep at night with a smile on his face; he awakes in the morning with it still there. Now and again (say, first thing in the morning) he asks himself, wonderingly, why he feels so happy. And, with his answer to himself and with the advertence it involves, his happiness comes more sharply into focus and he experiences it more fully—he "finds" it. Substitute "God" for "happiness" and one has not too inexact an idea of what Ignatius was able to do, and why he could do it.

He could do much else besides. Unlike the majority of mystics, who when they have their experience of God are so invaded that they can experience nothing else, Ignatius could carry out

¹ See THE MONTH, May, 1961, pp. 261-274.

the most absorbing and distracting occupations. The reason he could do so was because the experience was limited to the substance of his being. There was no ligature of the faculties. Intellect and will were free to engage in any and all employments. Because they were left free in this experience of Himself, God could accord it to Ignatius uninterruptedly throughout whole years of his life. For it does not seem in the designs of Providence, this side of Paradise, that anyone for long should be only and totally absorbed in Him.

As theologian of the spiritual life, Ignatius again is a mystic with a difference. He provided no such enrichments of the Christian heritage as have Origen or Bernard or John of the Cross with their subtle analyses of the mystic encounter. It would perhaps be to engage in profitless speculation to wonder, at this late date, if ever he was tempted to try it. All the indications are that he never was. He might have been were there a progression and a variety in his experience. But there was none. Or had there been darkness in it or doubts about it. But, again, there was none. Most important, however, was the experience's leaving the faculties untouched for it is only with the data provided upon that level that traditionally one began one's analysis. There was no such data. There was only the magnificent datum of his conscious juncture, deep in his being, with the operative Godhead. There he knew, he tells us, how God created, how the divine Persons proceeded, how Christ is present in the Eucharist, etc. Thence he learned, experientially, before ever he sat in the theology classrooms of Paris, the doctrine of the instrument.

Today, the beneficiaries of successive revivals in Thomism and in liturgical studies, we are only beginning to explore to our profit the rich relevance of instrumental causality for an understanding of the Christian dispensation and the manner of God's acting within it. From the day by the Cardoner to his death decades later in Rome, St. Ignatius saw everything in terms of it. The hundreds of letters of spiritual counsel he wrote or had written for him, the Constitutions of his Order, the *Spiritual Exercises*, all are dominated by this one master intuition. To be apt and pliant instruments in the hands of God is the end of all being for all upon this earth—that is his constant theme and, theologically, it is impossible to think of one more basic or better. It is a doctrine that can be parodied, as it was in the *canard*

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that Jesuits taught the end justified the means. It can, if cut from its roots in the liturgy, end a stick much to the liking of activists with a particular apostolic drum to beat. It can easily be turned inside out and made an excuse for the lack of personal initiative. But, with a modicum of good sense and a mountainous patience in its application to oneself and to others, it introduces one infallibly if not to the luminous experience of Ignatius at least to the expression, equally luminous, of the will of Him whom Ignatius thus learned to serve.

Perhaps the paradox indulged in above will by now have been pardoned. The mysticism of St. Ignatius was theologically more informative than a less limited experience would have been because it conveyed an insight into reality which is valid for whatever time or place or condition, which undercuts all differences in schools of spirituality and diversities of possible apostolates and varieties of character or temperament while according an added firmness and meaning to them all. One could hardly wish it to have been otherwise.

PROFESSOR TOYNBEE'S APOLOGIA

By

J. J. DWYER

FOR TWENTY YEARS from 1934 to 1954 Professor Toynbee circled the Earth in a capsule of his own making called *A Study of History*. Ten volumes appeared and then an Historical Atlas and Gazetteer (Vol. XI). This great mass of interpretations and discussions, assumptions and conjectures was eventually condensed into a two-volume abridgement and then into one of a single volume. The revelation produced strong and widespread criticism among a considerable number of historical scholars, and the present volume¹ is Dr. Toynbee's reaction to such criticism.

¹ *A Study of History, Volume XII, Reconsiderations*, by Arnold J. Toynbee (Oxford University Press for the Royal Institute of International Affairs 45s).

It is always possible out of ten or eleven volumes to make a twelfth—especially if they are one's own—and the Professor has had the rather original idea of assembling all these hostile scrutinies and presenting them intermingled with his answers. Lay critics into whose hands the various volumes happened to fall have been impressed, not to say concussed, by the heavy panoply of learning; but why the author should have been at such pains to draw attention to the number, range and force of the professional criticism is perhaps a matter for surprise. While calling his apologia *Reconsiderations*, he would have preferred to use St. Augustine's word *Retractationes*, which really means "re-handling," but that he would have been thought to be publishing a general retractation of his views. This he is far from doing though it must be said at once that he explains and defends himself with singular urbanity, seldom complaining of misrepresentation, often acknowledging a certain amount of validity in the criticisms, and with a kind of tranquil dignity occasionally admitting error. More often, however, he points out, after some such admission, that it does not make much difference and that the slight twist given to the pattern has not impaired its essential correctness.

There are here nineteen chapters of close—often very close—print, half a dozen annexes, one of which is a remarkable *autobiographia literaria* entitled *Ad Hominem*, and a long bibliography, ten pages of which contain a list of the critiques of the great work. This list gives particulars of some two hundred books, reviews and articles, a striking indication of the amount of notice that the *Study of History* has received.

The criticisms range from epigrams like "hardening of the categories" to detailed objections by specialists. Much of it emphasises respect for the element of uniqueness in history as against Dr. Toynbee's determination to find "patterns" and uniformities. "In history," said Stubbs, "generalisations are *ipso facto* untrue." In the early part of the nineteenth century writers were fond of "the philosophy of history" before they had appreciable knowledge of history, when hardly anybody but Lingard and Ranke had ever seen State Papers, let alone manuscripts. Historians must make use of general propositions, but their first obligation is to the facts which they must ascertain before they generalise and talk about Challenges and Responses and Counter-Offensives.

They must have in some degree a philosophy of history, though they must dominate it, not be dominated by it. On the larger scale, when like Professor Toynbee, they are discoursing of civilisations, they generally see that the differences are more significant than the likenesses and that the diversities of vast masses of facts do not warrant categories and classifications. Toynbee, as a "meta-historian," seems to be bent upon discovering systems and establishing laws. In the words of Christopher Dawson, one of his principal and most authoritative of his critics, too much of it is telescopic, too little microscopic. The Professor now admits that, where a number of competent critics concur there must be something in the points they make. The Dutch historian, Pieter Geyl, the late Sir Ernest Barker, and Sir Maurice Powicke all agree, for instance, that he is more poet and prophet than historian. T. S. Gregory says: "A poet and a mystic"; E. E. Y. Hales goes farther and says roundly that he deals in "myth." Geyl, the most pungent and persistent of all, points out that it is impracticable to think of history in terms of units which Toynbee calls "civilisations" and that he introduces into his argument his own constructions as established data. Sir E. L. Woodward observes that his use of analogy illustrates the recklessness of his ways of thinking. The American scholar Philip Bagby complains that "Toynbee has done a great disservice to the comparative study of civilisations and tended to bring discredit on the whole enterprise by undertaking his investigations in so ill-conceived and unscientific a manner. He represents, even in comparison with Spengler, a step backwards towards the pre-scientific moralising philosophy of history; as the apocalyptic visions in the later volumes show, he is primarily a prophet—a prophet disguised as a 'Modern Western student of history'." "A personal View of History," or "A Personal Document" are quite usual headings; the strongly subjective character is what everybody finds. Another critic speaks of an "Icarean effort"; another that the survey is an attempt at the impossible; Postan suggests that if he had been a social scientist he would never have attempted to solve the problems of society and civilisation by a frontal attack on the massed evidence of all the historical societies. A Jewish scholar's blunt comment on the lucubrations about Judaism is that on these matters he is an ignoramus.

On the other hand, there have been appreciative judgments.

A German scholar, Curtius, says that we are given the whole of history and that, for the first time, the survey is a complete one. Another, that he is perhaps the first to attempt to write the history of the human race in the genuine meaning of the phrase. The Catholic historical scholar, E. E. Y. Hales, says that Toynbee's work surveys the entire field more widely than it has ever before been surveyed. Others distinguished between the earlier and later volumes, regarding the treatment of historic civilisations in Volumes I-VI as brilliantly successful, whereas from Volume VII onwards the history of religion becomes, for him, history proper so that he ceases to take civilisations as being the intelligible fields of study. In his *Dynamics of World History*, Christopher Dawson regards the case of Toynbee as a difficult one "because he is at the same time an historian, a sociologist of comparative culture, and a meta-historian." Others again agree in using terms like "mystic," "salvational history" and even "theodicy" for the work. The most serious accusation is, no doubt, that of mixing the categories. G. B. Joynt has it that "categories which are the result of empirical generalisations . . . are treated on the same level of meaning and as if they were derived in exactly the same way as 'the laws of God.' Toynbee has attempted to blend two kinds of knowledge: religious and historical. What Toynbee has written is really much closer to theology than history."

But is there really any theological competence? The rationalistic bias is everywhere very evident. Christianity, he says, has a conspicuous counterpart in Islam. Both religions were derived from Judaism and both parted company with Judaism in order to preach Judaic monotheism to the non-Jewish world. And again, they are both deviations from Judaic religion; "each prospered because it got rid of the handicap of being a Jewish national religion, or Arab national religion, respectively." Again, the pictures mutually held and believed about each other by Latin and Orthodox Christianity are both of them "preposterous caricatures" and then he proceeds to balance his own picture of the Orthodox Church by exaggerating the importance of the Nestorians and the Monophysites.

How far has Dr. Toynbee met all these varied criticisms? Not very far. He cites Fr. Martin D'Arcy's book, *The Sense of History*, but that naturally does not afford him much support. There is one notable retraction. He had made out that there were four

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higher religions, Christianity, Islam, Hinduism and Mahayan Buddhism, all theologically equivalent. He has since admitted that Judaism should have been included. Then the Resurvey of Civilisations. The original classification showed just exactly twenty-three "full-blown civilisations, four that were arrested at an early stage in their growth, and five that were abortive." This arrangement was criticised by Bagby under at least five heads as "a peculiar jumble of incompatible and incomparable entities." The criterion for identifying civilisations was not uniform: sometimes it was material culture, in other cases religious, in others race. Moreover, it was declared to be incomplete, subjective and capricious. After discussion we now meet with a revised list. The "full-blown" are solemnly set out under the following titles: A: Independent—Unrelated to Others; Unaffiliated to Others; Affiliated to Others. B: Satellites (fifteen in number), and then come the Abortive Civilisations: *viz.* First Syriac (eclipsed by Egyptiac); Nestorian Christian (eclipsed by Islamic); Monophysite Christian (eclipsed by Islamic); Far Western Christian (eclipsed by Western); Scandinavian (eclipsed by Western); Medieval City-State Cosmos (eclipsed by Modern Western). After that, the intrepid reader is confronted by a chart, ruled, dated and shaded. All this involves explanation of the terms used and these are not readily intelligible. Among the Abortives, for instance, we find: "? Elamite (of Sumero Akkadian)"; "? Urartian (of Sumero Akkadian)"; "South-East Asian (first of Indic, then in Indonesia and Malaya only, of Islamic)"; and so on. No wonder the term *hubris* has been applied to this incantation which is calmly set out as self-explanatory. The plain fact is that all this amounts to a claim to knowledge that no human being could possibly possess. A specialist might, for instance, make confident statements about the Minoan-Helladic-Mycenaean culture, but he would not be very absolute about Babylon or the Hittites, or Islam, or the Jews—still less about China and Japan, India and Malaya. Ordinary mortals know that, today, when archaeology is constantly making fresh discoveries and data are being accumulated more rapidly than they can be interpreted, fixed classifications and sweeping generalisations are temerarious and they postulate knowledge that nobody can fully possess. It is indeed this constant suggestion of impossible knowledge that creates distrust in so many readers and Dr. Toynbee seems to go out of

his way to accentuate it. Who would make assertions about the picture held by the Athenians of the Boeotian culture, or the Achaean picture of the Aetolian culture? How many scholars would think that they had the Israelite picture of the Philistine culture? Incidentally, it would be more interesting to be told who precisely the Philistines were.

The strong impression of subjectivity in all this work will be greatly increased by the perusal of the remarkable section entitled *Ad Hominem*. This is explicitly and frankly personal. Answering the charge that his singularities are the outcome of the ordinary English classical education, Dr. Toynbee expatiates on the benefits of that discipline and explaining that he received an intensive training in writing Latin and Greek, he actually imputes such deficiencies as may have been noticed in his style of writing to excessive Latinism. Prolixity and long overloaded sentences are not the most usual results of latinity. Barker courteously described all that as "Ciceronian," but many people will recall familiar Latin tags that strongly suggest concision.

A more interesting side of these annals is the list of what Dr. Toynbee styles his Rejections. He rejects the claim of the Jews to be the Chosen People though he does not find Islamic pretensions any less preposterous than Christian or Jewish pretensions. He rejects the pretension of Christianity to be a unique revelation of the truth about Reality and a unique means of grace and salvation. (Our Lord and His mission have already been firmly disposed of, in the section on Judaism.) He associates himself with Symmachus, "the last non-Christian spokesman for religious liberty," and the reader is expected to remember *non uno itinere pervenitur ad tam grande secretum*. He naturally rejects Communism. Another comprehensive rejection is of the claim of Western Civilisation "to be a unique representative of the species: the only civilisation truly worthy of the name." The West, he thinks, has always claimed too much. When asked whether he considers that the West has always lived up to its ideals, there flashes through his mind a catalogue of Western atrocities: the Crusades, the Spanish Inquisition, the Spanish conquest of Peru, the Catholic-Protestant wars of Religion, the English slave-trade, plantation slavery in the Old South of the United States, racial discrimination in Africa, two world wars in one life-time, the genocide of the Jews by the Nazis, the French

war of repression against the national resistance movement in Algeria. The catalogue is, as usual, somewhat selective; he might have found room in it for Cromwell in Ireland.

Among many pages of personal opinions and preferences comes the curious avowal of a distaste for English history. We are told that the prospect of reading it in accordance with the Oxford Syllabus was so unattractive that it was hardly entertained for a moment. Dr. Toynbee tells us that he regards England, taken altogether, as infinitely less interesting than Egypt. After a vigorous paragraph on the world-importance of Egypt he goes on to say that "England has never been the seat of an independent, self-contained civilisation. . . . She has never played a part of first-class importance in the World as a whole except during a quarter of a millennium including, but also ending in, the Second World War. And even during the period of her greatness, she was still never more than one out of half-a-dozen Western great powers and several dozen Western national states."

We may ask, what, when all is said and done, is the real purpose, beyond self-revelation, of this long and loaded postscript to the famous ten volumes. The discussion will doubtless be kept going but the World's Debate is not likely to fail for want of contributors to it. It would seem that what Dr. Toynbee has mainly succeeded in doing is to exhibit what has been called: *cette puissance de déduction qui est propre aux hommes d'une seule idée*. There may be many ideas, but the ruling passion here is to establish laws and make plans and schemes of all human things. He ends with the reminder that he stands with Lucretius, whose *De Rerum Natura* he is fond of quoting. But we all knew that, long ago.

TOMÁS LUIS DA VICTORIA

Servus Christi Ardens

By

ERIC TAYLOR

THREE HUNDRED AND FIFTY YEARS AGO, on 27 August 1611, a priest died in Madrid, at the convent of the Descalzas Reales. He had been chaplain to the sister of Philip II, the Empress Maria, widow of Maximilian II; but he had never held high office in the Church, and had followed the Empress to the convent to serve inconspicuously as a priest, and at times as an organist and choirmaster. After she died, in 1603, he was content to remain there until his own death. As a priest he would no doubt have been quickly forgotten in this world: nothing in his life suggests that he sought fame, or that he put anything before the unobtrusive fulfilment of his priestly duties. Yet long before his death he was known "even to the Indies" as a contemporary said of him, for he was already recognised as one of the greatest of composers: Tomás Luis da Victoria.

That he was an unassuming man can be told from the barest outlines (and little more is known) of his career. The world into which he was born was glowing with the passionate zeal of the Counter-Reformation. St. Ignatius himself, who through his seminaries was to exert a vast influence on the young priest, had died only twelve years earlier. Yet another great religious leader was even closer, for, like St. Teresa, Victoria was born at Avila, and it was during his adolescence that the saint embarked upon her monumental series of foundations with her first convent at Avila itself. Indeed, St. Teresa herself, in her book of the "Foundations," mentions a brother of Tomás, Agustín, as one who had helped her in her work. When Victoria left home it was to go to Rome (where his name became Italianised as

Vittoria) to prepare for the priesthood at the Collegium Germanicum which Ignatius had founded for German students, but which by now had been opened to students of other nationalities.

It was once thought that Victoria had been ordained before he went to Rome, and that he went there to study music. This is certainly not so, and has never even been particularly probable. It was natural and very common for young Spanish ordinands to go to Rome for their training, but there was less reason for a music student to go. It is true that the most outstanding composers, such as Morales and Guerrero, tended to gravitate to Rome after they had established a reputation at home, and that there were many Spanish singers in Rome. But Rome was only one of several important musical centres, and Spain itself was far from being a backwater. We are inclined to think of a "Roman" school led by "Italian" composers, but the fact is that in Rome—as in Venice, Mantua, Naples, or Munich or Vienna—the traditions of vocal composition, both sacred and secular, were very largely shaped by Franco-Netherlandish composers, who were happily scattered all over Europe. Palestrina himself is one of the first great, genuinely Italian composers, and his style too is deeply rooted in Flemish music—that of Josquin des Prez for example. Flemish influence was as profound in Spain as anywhere else, though its effect there was to enrich a native tradition rather than to create one. The Emperor Charles V, who had received a Flemish education and had played the organ in his youth, himself had an entire *capilla flamenca*. Philip II, also musical, maintained this choir, but it was small compared to the choir of 150 monks which he installed in the Escorial. Music played an extremely important part in cathedrals, churches, convents and monasteries throughout Spain, and we can tell from the music written for them (such as Victoria's own twelve-part *Missa Laetatus Sum* written for the convent of the Descalzas Reales) that they must have had exceptionally large musical establishments. Victoria himself was most probably a member of one of these as a boy, at the Cathedral at Avila. Certainly his home-town, where Morales had once been *maestro de capilla*, provided every opportunity of becoming thoroughly immersed in an immensely vital and developed tradition of liturgical music.

The Collegium Germanicum where Victoria went to study was closely associated with the Collegium Romanum, which

had acquired Palestrina as its *maestro* in the same year that Victoria went to Rome. Whether Victoria studied with Palestrina is not known, though his music, if nothing else, would make it highly probable. It is certain that after he had left the seminary to become organist and choirmaster at Santa Maria di Monserrato, Victoria succeeded Palestrina at the Collegium Romanum in 1571. Two years later, however, he returned to the Collegium Germanicum, this time to direct the music. While he was there for the second time he was ordained, *extra tempore*, into the priesthood. By now he was assured of a singularly distinguished career in Roman church music, the more so because, as a priest, he would have none of the difficulties which at times had beset even the illustrious Palestrina as a married layman. Yet in 1578 he put all this on one side, to become a simple resident priest at the Church of San Girolamo della Carità.

It was at San Girolamo that St. Philip Neri, the friend of St. Ignatius, had established the Congregation of the Oratory. Three years after its foundation, in the year that Victoria went there, the Congregation itself moved to the Church of Santa Maria in Vallicella; but St. Philip himself stayed behind, and for five years he and Victoria were living in the same house. It is not difficult to imagine how close was their association. St. Philip's radiant personality drew everyone to him, and from the earliest days of his Congregation he had stressed the value to the Church of music, especially the singing of hymns, the *Laudi Spirituali*.

Yet Victoria himself never became a member of the Oratory, nor was he even closely associated with its music. Not that he had given up his work as a musician: on the contrary, his fame was widespread and his works were appearing in magnificent editions. His first book of motets, which includes *O Quam Gloriosum*, *O Vos Omnes* and *O Magnum Mysterium*, had been printed in Venice in 1572. The second collection had appeared in the year after his ordination, and most of the other motets as well as most of the masses (including those based on the motets *O Quam Gloriosum* and *O Magnum Mysterium*) and the Holy Week settings were published while he was at San Girolamo. Indeed, the composer may even then have been so celebrated that the humble priest of San Girolamo was forgotten, as he has been since. Victoria's priorities, however, were clearly different. It is known that he once contemplated giving up

composition altogether lest it should interfere with his devotions, and in the preface to the *Cantica B. Virginis per annum* (1581) he wrote that his whole ambition was to use music as a means of raising the soul to the contemplation of divine truth. His powers and gifts as a composer were instruments of his priesthood. More than that of any other priest-composer, and there have been many, his music seems truly a priestly offering.

Victoria's human instincts showed themselves not in a love of fame but in a love of his home country. There was a general tendency for the many Spanish musicians who settled in Italy, such as Morales, to return to Spain, unlike the Flemish composers who seemed to settle abroad more readily. In a dedication to Philip II in 1583 Victoria spoke longingly of returning to his native land. But it was not until about 1594 or 1595, some years after his appointment to the Empress Maria, that he was to join her in Madrid at the convent where she had already settled, and where he was to spend the rest of his life. His last composition and his finest was a Requiem, the *Officium Defunctorum* for six voices, composed in memory of the Empress and dedicated to her daughter, the Princess Margaret, who had entered the convent with her mother and had become a professed nun.

As far as we know, Victoria had never in his whole life written a note of anything except liturgical music: the expressiveness and pictorialism which other men delighted to employ in their settings of secular words he turned to use in his motets. This is an exclusiveness which is unparalleled. Even Palestrina, though he professed later to "blush and grieve" at having produced such works, had composed two books of secular madrigals. The two men are often bracketed together, yet the contrast between them is striking. We need not fall into the vulgar error of supposing that business acumen is incompatible with sanctity, but there was only one occasion in Palestrina's life—at a time when he was overwhelmed with grief after a whole series of personal bereavements culminating in the death of his wife—that the idea of entering the priesthood crossed his mind. And then he quickly dismissed it, and instead married a wealthy widow whose assets included her late husband's business as a furrier and leather merchant, a business which Palestrina took over and ran so profitably that he was able to develop another side-line in real estate!

Even in the technique of composition there are real distinctions to be made between the methods of Victoria and Palestrina. True it is that Victoria learnt much from Palestrina, especially in the sensitive use of dissonance and the careful shaping of supple melodic lines. It is equally true, though less often acknowledged, that Palestrina in his later works seems to have learnt from Victoria (much as Haydn did from Mozart), not least the telling effect of the simplest musical devices such as plain chordal progressions in which contrapuntal elaboration has been whittled down to a minimum, as in the older composer's setting of the *Stabat Mater* towards the end of his life. And when Palestrina claimed to have adopted a more ardent and expressive style (*usus sum genere aliquanto alacriore*) for his motets from the canticles published in 1584 the influence of Victoria became plain. Yet Palestrina never went so far as Victoria in the direction of expressive chromaticism, and he was more conservative in his approaches to what was to become the classical system of major and minor tonality. Highly developed though Palestrina's harmonic sense was, his art is rooted in melody, melody permeated by the modal melodies of plainsong, and he was less willing than Victoria to colour his melody by "expressive" intervals or to compromise with it as a means of expression.

But the difference of style between Victoria and Palestrina is more than a matter of technical details, more than mere words can define. Analogies between the arts can be misleading, but there is some significance in the comparison of Palestrina to Raphael, of Victoria to El Greco. There is a vein of passion and intense personal feeling running through Victoria's music, well adjusted to liturgical demands though it was, which contrasts markedly with the calmer, somewhat dispassionate spiritual nobility of Palestrina. This quality of poignancy, colour, almost of drama, even more telling because of the restraint with which it was handled, was characteristic of the greatest Spanish church music. It reached its most profound expression in Victoria, and at times, in the *Tenebrae Responsoria* and the settings of the Passion for example, is almost unbearable. Truly this is the work of a great mystic, a musical representation of the vision of Ignatius, Teresa and John of the Cross. The phrase *Servus Christi Ardens* had been applied to Victoria long before he died, while he was still at San Girolamo: it will not be improved as a memorial.

A CATHOLIC GLANCE AT ENGLISH POLITICS

By

JOHN BIGGS-DAVISON

THE ENGLISH cherish old customs and reverence tradition. They subscribe eagerly to myths. But, unlike the Irish, they have little knowledge, or sense, of history. Uprooted by industrialism, they do not know their ancestors. Family trees are left to those who deal in heraldry and to old families—a term wrongly and significantly reserved to the upper class. Antiquity is one's grandfather's day. Yet we boast the continuity of our island life and story. Having so short a historical memory, we forget how revolutionary a people we have been. The seventeenth century was only three hundred years ago. Our national institutions keep their forms and titles while their whole content is utterly transformed.

Thus we are still governed by the Sovereign, her Lords and faithful Commons. Acts of Parliament are still "enacted by the Queen's most Excellent Majesty, by and with the advice and consent of the Lords Spiritual, and Temporal, and Commons, in this present Parliament assembled." But the power of Queen, Lords and Commons bears no relation to that of Plantagenet or Tudor predecessors. The English Monarchy is a few hundred years younger than the Papacy, but in recent years the democratically-elected assembly has become the dominant element in our mixed Constitution while the proper and spiritual jurisdiction of the Supreme Pontiff is no less absolute than of yore. Queen Elizabeth II was crowned with rites older than Charlemagne; but the Mass is no longer part of the Coronation office.

The Church of England is still governed by Bishops, Priests and Deacons. An Archbishop of Canterbury is enthroned in St. Augustine's Chair. The raiment and many of the outward forms are continuous. But the Established Church is not that

Ecclesia Anglicana whose liberties King John swore in *Magna Carta* to maintain. The Roman Catholic body is the *Ecclesia Anglicana*, the true English Church.

There might be more Anglican converts were not the historical reality of an untenable position obscured by the beauty of Anglican holiness and the cathedrals and churches where once the Roman or Sarum Mass was sung and said. Yet can disadvantage be turned to advantage if we point out the Catholic origin of the best in Anglicanism and chip away the plaster of Italianate or Hibernian innovations in the true Church to reveal the English oak of native Catholic ways. We must not leave it to the Anglicans to fly St. George's flag from the church towers or fail to lament the absence from our calendar of such names as Alfred.

In the Queen's ships one salutes the quarter deck. There was a crucifix beneath the poop. There was a crucifix on the altar of St. Stephen's Chapel when the Reformer Edward VI gave it to the Commons for their chamber. When wars and extravagance and inflation made it no longer possible for our medieval kings to live of their own, they summoned two Knights from each Shire, two Citizens from each City and two Burgesses from each Borough to vote him taxes. These were the Commons—not representatives of the common people but of the *communitates*, the communities (*Commune* in French). They came together at first when they could not be done without, and until Edward gave them St. Stephen's Chapel, met anywhere, sometimes in the chapter-house of Westminster Abbey. The House of Commons was for centuries in fact as well as theory the Lower House—not to be compared with the Princes of the Blood and the Church, the territorial lords, both ecclesiastical and lay, who formed the Great Council and later the House of Lords. After the great fire of 1834 the Commons moved from St. Stephen's Chapel, now St. Stephen's Hall, and the royal justice was done no longer in Westminster Hall where it was done upon Fisher and More and other English followers in the path of St. Stephen.

The martyrdom of St. Stephen is told in the Latin of the Vulgate in the Crypt Chapel of St. Mary Undercroft, beneath St. Stephen's Hall. In the Hall itself is a mural showing Cardinal Wolsey as angry as a turkeycock confronting Sir Thomas More. One hears many sermons on the Saint of Chelsea and is always told that he was Lord Chancellor of England. (As such he presided

over the House of Peers from the Woolsack stuffed then with English wool, the cloth trade, thanks to the Cistercians' sheep, having started England as a nation of shopkeepers, but stuffed now with wool from all over the Commonwealth.) What one is seldom reminded of is that More was Speaker of the Commons before as Lord Chancellor he became Speaker of the Lords. And it is Speaker More that told Wolsey who was demanding money from the Commons: "Not without debate." The right of redress of grievances before granting supply was a starting point for parliamentary control of the executive government.

Henry VIII was negatively Protestant, Edward VI positively so. Elizabeth I's *via media*—a Cecil made it, and Cecils are still pillars of the Anglican Establishment—ministered to English traditionalism—and English blindness to history and deafness to logic. For many Englishmen there is something dishonest about a logical proposition, particularly in theology. Logic in theology cost St. Thomas More his head.

It is to the credit of Anglican hearts that their church preserves much that is Catholic. It is to the discredit of Catholic hearts and heads that many good old Catholic ways and institutions have been kept, or revived, in the Anglican communion but not revived in the second spring of the Catholic Church in England.

Extreme Protestantism damned Laudian Anglicanism as Popish. Queen Henrietta Maria was a Papist and Uniate reconciliation with Rome was still not despaired of. Charles I saved Catholic priests from the savagery of Puritan Parliament men. The Catholic community gave Caesar more than his due when it came to the Civil War. Other murals in the Palace of Westminster show the sack of Basing House, a Catholic Cavalier stronghold, and Charles II's escape after Worcester field, which was aided by the Benedictine Fr. Huddleston. But most Cavaliers stood for the *via media* between Rome and Geneva, so eloquently enunciated by the "judicious" Hooker in his *Ecclesiastical Polity*. The Cavalier, Sir Jacob Astley, was in faith a Puritan. Most of them trusted Popery less than a modern High Churchman. The feast of King Charles the Martyr is celebrated nowadays in the Anglican communion with bell, book and biretta, but the Royal Martyr died a Protestant. Laud wanted decency in church rather than ritual. The Laudian Establishment was "low church" by Anglo-Catholic standards; but seemed Popish to sectaries who

would be rid of altars, surplices, Christmas and even the Lord's Prayer.

The Parliamentary struggle with the Crown was really a rebellion of the rich, or factions of them in both Houses, against the established order in church and state. The grandees disputed with Charles the royal power which contemporary European kings had centralised and consolidated. They made up their myth and doctored their precedents in order that revolution might appear conservative. They resented a personal royal rule which kept even justice for rich and poor. They resented Laud's attempt, backed by Charles, to apply canon law to the lives of both alike, to regain for the Church of England part at least of the lost lands of the Church of Rome—the name of Cromwell appears twice in our island history—and to stop the ejectment of tenants for the sake of more profitable farming. Their victory, which the Restoration could not reverse, ended what was left of the social order of Catholic England. And those who cut off the heads of Laud and his Sovereign cut down the Thorn of Glastonbury.

The Cavaliers were the forerunners of the Tory, the Roundheads of the Whig Party. We have it on the authority of Titus Oates that "these then for their Eminent Preying upon their Country, and their Cruel, Bloody Disposition, began to show themselves so like the Irish Thieves and Murtherers aforesaid, that they quickly got the name of Tories." The Tories were popish Irish bandits, the Whigamores Scotch Covenanters. The Tory Party took organised shape as the "Abhorrrers" of the Exclusion Bill brought in by the Whig "Petitioners" and party bosses to deny Charles II's Catholic brother, James Duke of York, the succession to the throne. Both sides had their party press and their parliamentary candidates. The Tories wore red ribbons in their hats: red is still the Tory colour in the North. True blue was then the Whig colour.

Through Reformation, Great Rebellion and English Revolution we can trace the triumph of private judgment and plutocracy untrammelled by medieval scruples as to just price and usury. Contract replaced status; society was atomised into competing individuals. Individualism became respectable. Benjamin Disraeli, following his father, the biographer of Charles I, saw through the Whig version of history which the Regius Professors were intended to impart through the Universities. He claimed that

"the tenure of property rests upon the performance of duty. England does not want to be turned into a spinning jenny, machine kind of nation." But this happened under the Whig ascendancy and in the heyday of Liberalism. "Property," Locke had said, "is for the sole advantage of the proprietor so that he may even destroy the thing he has property in." The memory of a Catholic social order was kept after 1688 by those Tories who retained, according to Lecky, "the sympathy of the country clergy, the country gentry, and of the poor." Dr. Johnson denounced Whiggism as "a negation of all principle." In the nineteenth century gallant forlorn hopes were launched by such as Cobbett, who mourned the monasteries and lambasted Elizabeth I, the Tractarians and their political counterpart the Young England Movement of Manners and Disraeli, by Evangelical Tories like Shaftesbury, Protestant Christian Socialists such as Charles Kingsley, Newman's unsuccessful adversary, and, at the turn of the century, by the "Chester-Belloc."

Yet the Tory memory of Catholic polity in a merrier England grew dim. The Tory Party became infected by Whiggery and imbued with the "spirit of the age," which was acquisitive and individualistic. The Industrial Revolution treated persons as things, enslaved them to economic laws, to *laissez-faire* at home and Free Trade abroad. Conservatives conserved not Christian order so much as the rights of property, now too seldom regarded as a trust. When property and the régime were threatened, or seemed to be threatened, by the influence of the French, as later by the Russian Revolution, when Home Rule measures appeared to menace the Irish estates of Whig patricians, the Conservative Party was strengthened in influence but morally weakened by an influx of opportunist and frightened magnates.

Despite Disraeli and the Tory Democracy, the Conservative Party became by the closing nineteen-hundreds largely an organ and mouthpiece of plutocracy. Paradoxically, the pursuit of the "Condition of England" question went by default to the new Radical wing of the Liberal Party and the Labour Party which grew up within it and took separate existence to plead in Parliament the cause of the Trade Unions which Disraelian Toryism had enfranchised but post-Disraeli Conservatism had neglected. Then and now the distributists, in so far as they could stomach parliamentary politics, inclined to the Liberal Party. Henry

George and the early Lloyd George had more in common than a surname. There was a brief Fair Trade movement against the prevailing *laissez-faire*. The Anglo-Catholic Tory, George Wyndham, author of the Irish land reform, could be dubbed by Chesterton "the last of England's knights." But issue was only fully taken with the political and economic spirit of the age when a self-made screw merchant from Brummagem added the cause of Tariff Reform to that of Social Reform and municipal socialism, and aimed to finance from imperial expansion the welfare of the island masses. Joseph Chamberlain, erstwhile republican, became prophet to the great constitutional party of a positive and united Empire, fit to survive and prosper in a world of competing continental super-states.

"Joe" was a Unitarian. The party to which he preached Imperial political and fiscal union was the Anglican party. The Tory roots were in the battlefields of Church and King. Their eighteenth-century extremes were non-juror and Jacobite. Gladstone was a High Churchman; he started as a Tory hope. His later deference to Radicalism seems to have been mainly tactical; the roots of the newer democratic and Radical Liberalism were in the chapels. My Liberal Dissenting grandfather taught my mother that Tories were folk who were born bad and made themselves worse. The Church of England was the Conservative Party at prayer. Conservative and Liberal, Church and Chapel—it was the Great Rebellion over again. Solid thrifty worth or canting pussyfooting humbug; chivalrous and paternal loyalty or hard-riding, hard-drinking reaction. Such were the images—to use the modern jargon—each made in the other's eyes.

Methodism in the Napoleonic period had sided with the Toryism of Pitt and Castlereagh against Tom Paine and subversion. But we have it from Mr. Morgan Phillips that Methodism, rather than Marxism, made the Labour Party. The British Labour Movement has comprehended great Christians like Stafford Cripps and Dick Stokes, agnostic patriots like Aneurin Bevan; its good intentions and reforming zeal shade on the Left into totalitarian treason. Insularity rubs shoulders with internationalism. The bulk of Labour voters are not Socialists according to any generally accepted definition; they are as scared of abstract principle and formal ideology as most Britons.

Most Catholics are said to vote Labour, either because "Labour"

sounds right to poorer people, or because of Irish origins. Irishmen with their long, Englishmen with their short, historical memories have made a mess and a myth of Erin. Ireland is a warning to those who would equate spiritual with political allegiance. Orangemen have forgotten that King Billy won the Boyne with a majority of Catholic troops. The Vatican was illuminated in celebration of his victory, which was an indirect blow to Louis XIV and Gallicanism. Irish Republicans do not always remember the Protestants and Freethinkers who led the earlier nationalist revolts and were sometimes condemned for their rebellion by the Irish Hierarchy. There were good Catholic Crown servants shot in Ireland coming out of Mass.

Christianity here is not as in some lands on both sides of the Iron Curtain a party matter. Our civil wars ranged Christians of various tendencies on both sides of the question. The Tory Bolingbroke might be an atheist; Deism sometimes went with Whiggery and seems to have been transmitted to John Churchill's great "Whig-Tory" descendant. But until recently few thinking Englishmen were uninfluenced by the English Bible and its message. It was otherwise in France, divided at the Revolution between Christians and Freethinkers, Catholics and Freemasons, each with their particular political media. The English are not schooled in Cartesian logic which proclaims in the principle of identity that nothing can be both what it is and its opposite. Even those whose Christianity is limited to accepting an Established Church to stay away from unless to be wed or buried, or to joining in grace at a City dinner, or a prayer at the Cenotaph, may resent being asked: "Are you a Christian?" As they would resent being asked if they are good drivers or have a sense of humour. Compromise and toleration and intellectual sloth enables a man to be, or believe himself to be, both an Anglican and a Freemason, and it is easier for an Anglican parson to preach heresy than to indulge, or not indulge, in liturgical vestments, lights and incense.

Christianity, fervent, indifferent or self-deceiving, may be found in all our constitutional political parties. Only the Liberal fraction are without a Catholic M.P. There is no desire for a Catholic, or Christian, party. Christian Democracy has flourished in countries where anti-clericalism is a part of politics. Christian Democrat movements have achieved much but inevitably

involved the reputation of the Church in the corrupting expediency of politics. Their advocacy in some Continental countries of a particular form of European integration has roused fears of a "Vatican Europe," a reactionary revival of the Empire of Charlemagne.

In England there is no Catholic caucus in Parliament. Catholic Members once met—and resolved not to meet again. On Suez, or the death penalty, or nuclear disarmament, or the Common Market, there is no Catholic parliamentary view. The cause of Catholic schools is best fought in Parliament not as a Catholic or even a Christian cause, but as an assertion of natural justice of concern also to the Jew and the conscientious unbeliever. Catholics of all parties con their Aquinas and the great Encyclicals. They will rightly disagree on the practical application of Christian social doctrine to the politics of their time.

GABRIEL FIELDING AND THE CATHOLIC NOVEL

By

DEREK STANFORD

CAN WE TALK about two traditions, or lines of approach, in the modern Catholic novel? If we can, then in this country they might bear the names of Greene and Waugh. The first would represent the "line of feeling"; the second, that of fantasy and wit. The first would stand for identification; the second for satirical distance and detachment. The first would view the world through the charity of the imagination; the second would measure man and his shortcomings by a public or objective rule of reason.

Among our younger Catholic authors, Gabriel Fielding would clearly belong to the "line of Greene." *Through Streets Broad and Narrow*, his fifth novel, is the fourth in the series of a "family saga"—the story of the Blaydon family, and, above all,

of the younger son John. But for all we learn about John's parents, his grandparents and brothers and sisters, "family saga" is not quite the term for these Blaydon chronicles. The large cast of characters in these novels are important not so much for themselves as for how they come home to John. They are lit by the subjective lighting of his mind—are seen in relationship and never isolated. The John Blaydon novels constitute, in fact, a private drama of the growing-up process; a document of the joys and pains, mostly the pains, of achieving adulthood.

What, on the whole, then, we are shown is a boy's or adolescent's view of adults; but this is, by no means, the same as immaturity's vision of maturity. One of the things which John observes is how very lop-sided, how very uncertain, the figures in his adult world appear to be. Their behaviour is without the roundedness, the mellowness and sure pivot, which John had expected to find in them. He sees how these venerable beings have aged without attaining to wisdom, patience, control, or the other virtues. Original sin has mutilated them, leaving them only nominally mature.

John's drama of discovery is, therefore, two-fold. As an adolescent he feels the stigma of not possessing the stature of adults. He feels the humiliation of his inadequate knowledge and experience; his sense of shortcomings in terms of "lived" experience. But when he looks up to those adult figures—who should be his criteria—he finds them warped, chipped, and insufficient. The defective nature of mortal behaviour is thus borne doubly in upon him.

The very nature of John's perception is, in itself, basically tragic; since, in the novels we have so far been given, he is not shown as possessing the convinced faith to deal with this recognition, which has something of the young Newman's "aboriginal calamity" about it.

But the tempo of the drama, the pitch of discovery, is heightened by the actions, the happenings, in the story. Perhaps John's first shock of recognition comes when he senses that "Pal," his grandpa, is involved in clandestine behaviour (in fornication with his nanny), and to the rest of the family is an object of suspicion and shame.

Lust runs as a strain through all Fielding's novels: either concealed, or suppressed, or admitted. Neither does admission of it—

counter to the tenets of Freudian thought—bring about relief or sublimation. In the early chapters of *Brotherly Love*, David Blaydon's conversational manner of opening the hatches on sex appears healthy. His young brother breathes this oxygen of frankness, and a vast fug of sinister secrecy seems to be dissipated by his gesture. His breezy words blow through John's mind, liberating it from the fears and dread planted there by his mother's hints and probings. But what appears so open to the daylight reason is fated to be driven underground again. David marries, but the spirit of lust continues to drive him indiscriminately onwards. What had once appeared a frank freedom from hypocrisy is shown now as destructive licence.

John, in his impressionable and vulnerable teens, meets a girl of his own age, Victoria. In her he finds a friend, a romantic love, an image of intimate beauty and wonder. At a garden-party, they escape from the adults and bathe together in an ornamental lake. For a moment we are given an Edenic situation—an idyll in which innocence can exist solely because its duration is short-lived. But right on the threshold of romantic experience, John sustains a terrifying trauma. He and Victoria go for a picnic to some neighbouring "holiday" caves. There, in a darkness symbolic of evil, they meet a man prying upon them. The man tells Victoria he will give her a lift in his car to the village. She goes—and is lost to John for ever: the man is a sex-maniac and a killer.

John's intimation of romantic love is blighted, then, fearfully before it unfolds. A bestial carnality violates the boy's foreknowledge of what love might become, might be. And this horrific lust is confirmed, on a lower level, by John's breaking in upon an act of sex between Victoria's mother and a man-friend. This, as it were, obsessively drives home the guilt and horror of lust in the boy's imagination. John, distracted at what he takes to be the abduction of Victoria, has run to her mother's house for help. But what meets him there is not the prompt and practical assistance of adults but their own graceless (and loveless) involvement in the trafficking of bodies.

Haunted by a loss of love before it could be fully known, and by a shame concerning those poor approximations to it, John's development is inhibited and retarded. For years, he seems doomed to move between the dismal margins of shame and

obsession. And his first complete sexual encounter—a casual student affair—leaves him only with a sense of disappointment and fear as to the physical danger of the act.

Meanwhile, David—John's elder brother—has entered Anglican orders and married, but still pursues his random liaisons to the consequent scandal of the parish. Added to this is his vice of whisky-drinking.¹ John continues to love him, but is deeply bewildered by him. Shortly before Derek's death by climbing, he has come upon the last of his brother's marital treacheries. David knows himself for a sinner, and the knowledge of how far he has travelled in his moral aberration appears to root him more firmly in the groove.

But sex as sin (*i.e.* sex as selfish lust) is not the only unhealthy discovery John is to make in the adult world. David's curate, a smug little man, has only the thought of his new self-importance when faced with the death of his vicar and the suffering which John presents to him. His attempt to understand the boy's grief and confusion of mind is primly formal and utterly defective. He offers John a neatly printed well-written leaflet on Christian Consolation which is his own composition. The sentiments expressed are impeccable, but of the springs of charity the man is wholly dry. Grown-ups sin, as John sees, not only by commission but by omission too.

Gabriel Fielding's concern with themes of love and sex make the comparison of his novels with those of Graham Greene a natural one. And if one went beyond British writing, well, then, there would be François Mauriac with his "neo-Jansenistic" drama of the flesh.

Perhaps one might speak of Greene and Mauriac as Christian pessimists in fiction. Their thought seems to seek affinity with Pascal and Rochefoucauld.

Gabriel Fielding's imagination is no optimistic one; but a certain quality preserves his writing from the parching analysis of human pretension which we get in the work of the two senior authors. Fielding's *Eight Days* possibly goes farther in unmasking the demoniac ego in man than any other novel by his coevals. But Fielding, for all this, stops short of the position occupied by Greene in *A Burnt-out Case*. The terrible "scorched-earth policy"

¹ One thinks here of the two priests in *The Power and the Glory* and *The Potting Shed*.

whereby all save "Faith and Works"¹ are ruthlessly razed to the ground has no counterpart in Fielding's novels.

Perhaps what holds him back is humour (least evident, significantly, in *Eight Days*). Wit—the critical insight of the reason—is present in both Mauriac and Greene, but the genial incongruity of humour is something which we seldom find in their pages.

So, in *Streets Broad and Narrow*, John reacts to the revelation of a student-friend's homosexual feelings with the twin-responses of humour and disgust. The instinctive moral repugnance which he experiences is overlapped by a sense of the incongruous risible image which the pervert presents. Laughter is our measure of a straying from the norm.

Fielding is a novelist whose vision of life the reader has yet to have completed for him. The Blaydon-family saga-novels, with John Blaydon as "the experiencing centre," have only dealt so far with the childhood and youngest manhood of the central figure. In so far as John Blaydon is, in part, a fictional *persona* for their author, we can only expect to find Fielding's vision completed when this character achieves maturity. Meanwhile, no more vivid chronicler of the confused innocence of the early heart (before grace and wisdom have established it) exists.

AN IRISH OCCASION

IN *Our Irish Theatre* Lady Gregory wrote: "On one of those days at Duras in 1898, Mr. Edward Martyn, my neighbour, came to see the Count, bringing with him Mr. Yeats, whom I did not then know very well, though I cared for his work very much and had already, through his directions, been gathering folklore. They had lunch with us, but it was a wet day, and we could not go out. After a while I thought the Count wanted to talk to Mr. Martyn alone; so I took Mr. Yeats to the office where the steward used to come to talk . . . we sat there through that wet afternoon, and though I had never been at all interested in theatres, our talk turned on plays. Mr. Martyn had written two, *The Heather Field* and *Maeve*. . . I said it was a pity we had no Irish theatre where such plays could be given. Mr. Yeats said that had always been a dream of his, but he had of late thought it an impossible one, for it could not at first pay its way, and there was no money for such a thing in Ireland.

¹ Some of Greene's critics would add "Works" as well; and a few would read the book as potentially excluding "Faith."

"We went on talking about it, and things seemed to grow possible as we talked, and before the end of the afternoon we had made our plan. We said we would collect money, or rather ask to have a certain sum of money guaranteed. We would then take a Dublin theatre and give a performance of Mr. Martyn's *Heather Field* and one of Mr. Yeats's own plays, *The Countess Cathleen*. I offered the first guarantee of £25."

On 20 August 1961 as the guest of Peter Patrick, fifth Baron Hemphill, heir of Edward Martyn of Tulira, and his wife, Ann, née Rutledge, great-great-niece of Lady Gregory, chance brought me to Duras House from Tulira with my host and hostess, who invited me to the ceremony with them as the guests of Mr. Eoin O'Mahony. As a former member of the Abbey players and one who throughout his boyhood had attended the Abbey Theatre weekly during holidays from school, it was a great joy to be "among those present," and to find that Mr. T. R. Henn, President of St. Catherine's College, Cambridge, whose lectures and hospitality I had enjoyed as an undergraduate, was to deliver the address on the occasion of the presentation of Duras House by members of the Ebrill family to *An Óige*, the Irish Youth Hostel Association. In a most eloquent speech Mr. Henn, who had come from the Yeats summer school at Sligo, said:

"We who are of Ireland,¹ and 'born into that ancient sect,'² are conscious from our childhood days that we live in a land of ruins. Some have been made by prehistoric men, some by what Sir Thomas Browne called 'the drums and tramplings of three conquests'³ (but our historians would remember six or more), some by our own wars, for real or imagined freedom. The reasons for these ruins are too many, too varied, to tell. Often it is no more than that of

'gangling stocks grown great, great stocks run dry,
Ancestral pearls all pitched into a sty'⁴

in the 'great mutations' of history. Many times our poets have lamented the passing of a great house such as this—

A spot whereon the founders lived and died
Seemed once more dear than life; ancestral trees
Or gardens rich in memory glorified
Marriages, alliances and families,
And every bride's ambition satisfied.
When fashion or mere fantasy decrees

¹ *I am of Ireland*, C.P. p. 303.

² *The Statues*, C.P. p. 375.

³ *Urn Burial*, Ch. V.

⁴ *A Bronze Head*, C.P. p. 382.

We shift about—all that great glory spent
Like some poor Arab tribesman and his tent.¹

I have seen that happen, all too often, in my own countryside, just to the south of us here.

"From the ruins of such houses we have drawn, throughout history, something of our melancholy, our pride, and even our despair; so Yeats wrote of Coole, not foreseeing how soon it would be desolate:

Here, traveller, scholar, poet, take your stand
When all those rooms and passages are gone,
When nettles wave upon a shapeless mound
And saplings root among the broken stone . . .²

"But today we are met, not on a battlefield (though three are near us) to celebrate something more important than any battle, more gracious than any nostalgic recollection of a sad past or greatness. We are looking to a future. Instead of a House that might have crumbled till it became

'an old ruin that the winds howled through'³

—the generosity of its owners has yielded it up to a kind of resurrection. It is to be dedicated today to the service of youth, which is eternal. No alien rich man can take Duras now; it will not serve to stable cattle, as Yeats's Tower does, nor fall into the hands of what James Stephens called 'the awful people of the Fomor.'⁴ It will become young again; it will not know age, or sorrow, or the threat of ruin.

"We meet to dedicate the House today. We do so in memory of four people. Yeats, Lady Gregory, Edward Martyn of Tullyra, Florimond, last Count de Basterot, its former owner of ancient lineage. With those names we join those of its most gracious and generous owners, Denis and Adrian Ebrill. In this county of

... 'cold grey rock and Galway rock and thorn's

all know their names. Three of them were instrumental in the founding and fostering of the Abbey Theatre; they drew together great men and women who acted in it, who wrote for it. Two were playwrights, one the greatest poet since Shakespeare. Count de Basterot himself was the friend and confidant of Lady Gregory: and it was here at Duras that, in Yeats's own words, 'Lady Gregory and I talked over my project of an Irish theatre, looking out upon the lawn of his house.'⁶ . . . And where, but for that conversation at Florimond de Basterot's had

¹ *Coole Park and Ballylee*, 1931, C.P. p. 275.

² *Coole Park*, 1929, C.P. p. 273.

³ *The Curse of Cromwell*, C.P. p. 350.

⁴ *The Crock of Gold*.

⁵ *In Memory of Major Robert Gregory*, C.P. p. 148.

⁶ *Autobiographies*, p. 38.

been the genius of Synge?'¹ Through de Basterot we are linked to the genius of France as of Ireland; to famous Galway names, ffrenches and Lynches. He died in 1904, when the Abbey was growing to its strength, the dream that we dreamt at Duras taking its first great shape.

"We give this House, in their name to youth and laughter; that those who follow them may know the healing of sea and mountain, the 'intricate motions'² of cloud and sunshine, the wisdom of our country in all her moods; that they may find their peace and make their souls in the 'mystical brotherhood'³ of the countryside; so that young people may come from Europe and from the New World, to make Duras a living thing once more.

"And if you believe (as I do) that our dead watch us, and that they may sometimes return, it is not unfitting to imagine that these four gracious spirits are here today. I think of Lady Gregory who fought in vain to save Coole for her grandchildren; of Yeats's Tower, of Spenser's Kilcolman; of all the houses burnt in my boyhood in Clare:

That better were with them to have been dead
Than here to see all desolate and waste . . .⁴

But this remains and is re-born. Do you remember the proud poem Yeats wrote to Lady Gregory at Coole?

If you that have grown old, were the first dead
Neither catalpa tree nor scented lime
Should hear my living feet, nor would I tread
Where we wrought that shall break the teeth of time.
Let the old faces play what tricks they will
In the old rooms; night can outbalance day.
Our shadows roam the garden gravel still,
The living seem more shadowy than they.⁵

But of this I am certain; that their spirits rejoice with us at the rescue of a House that no ill-fortune can ever kill again (and Yeats himself declared that to kill a house was a 'capital offence');⁶ that is dedicated not to the gracious living of an aristocracy that has passed, but to something that is a vital, joyful, living need of our time. In this country are many gravestones, memorials, statues, monuments; we have our ancient churchyards that 'swell with the waves and billows of the dead,'⁷ with the stones that 'tell truth scarce forty years.'⁸ I think it more fitting that we should lay the foundations of our

¹ *Autobiographies*, p. 381.

³ 'A.E.'

⁵ *The New Faces*, C.P. p. 238.

⁷ Donne, *Sermons*.

² *Stream and Sun at Glendalough*.

⁴ *Faerie Queene*, VI, XI, 22.

⁶ *Purgatory*.

⁸ Browne, *Urn Burial*.

memorials, not in the weathering and time-fretted stone, but in the living future of the spirit. What we have tried to do in Sligo is to do honour to a poet by ensuring, so far as lies within our power, that his poetry shall live, and continue to live, and give its wisdom and delight to more and more men and women of all nations to enjoy. Here, in a countryside that is linked in so many ways to Ireland's history and her literary genius, we accept and hand on with gratitude this noble gift, a living memorial to four great names."

This address was eloquently spoken until the speaker had pity on his hundreds of listeners who were being drenched to the skin as he spoke. Professor Felix Hackett, President of *An Óige*, Dr. Grassel, vice-President of the International Youth Hostel Federation, Miss Marion Lavery, a founder-member of *An Óige*, and Mr. Ernest Blythe, managing director of the Abbey Theatre, also spoke before the last-named unveiled a plaque in Caen stone with the simple inscription:

"It was in this house, then the property of Florimond Alfred Jacques, Count de Basterot, that Augusta, Lady Gregory of Coole Park, in the summer of 1898, met William Butler Yeats at the request of her neighbour, Edward Martyn, and there began between them the conversation which led to the founding of the Abbey Theatre."

The brush of Jack Yeats would have been needed to do justice to the strange and wondering crowd who listened patiently to the speeches in the open air while the rain came down in Clare-Galway torrents. There were children galore of every shape and size; there were courting couples sheltering under one umbrella in their Sunday best: there were Christabel, Lady Ampthill, in a red mackintosh, Lady Gregory's great-great niece, Lady Hemphill, with a flowing silk scarf round her head, and Lady Talbot de Malahide: there was one gombeen man who looked like the Playboy himself, and a Civic Guard sergeant straight from *The Rising of the Moon*, who was bothered by the fact that some hundreds of cars, many very large ones, were blocking the only road which led to and from Duras, and who wanted somebody to "make an announcement." The rain failed utterly in its effort to damp the spirits of the party who adjourned for tea as guests of *An Óige* in a much too small marquee: W. B. would not have enjoyed the jostling scramble at all, but Jack Yeats would have revelled in it, and Lady Gregory, "the charwoman of the Abbey Theatre," would certainly have been quite at home with the Kiltartan crowd.

I failed to get near Mr. Eoin O'Mahony, to whom "all this" and an excellent lunch at Kinvara Castle, which Sybil, Lady Ampthill, has bought from the Fogarty family and is courageously restoring; but I waved the thanks to him which I now put down in writing. In

a month's visit I saw Bunratty Castle, which Lord Gort has bought and restored, filling it with period furniture: Ashford Castle, Cong, Co. Mayo, which was a stately home of the Guinness family, and is now a still more stately hotel: Kinvara Castle in its wonderful setting, which is to be a home again: but more stimulating than all these was a visit to Kilfinnan Castle, Glandore, Co. Cork, only a short distance from the splendid ruins of Castle Freke, where the McCarthy Essayes have restored the lovely old thirteenth-century castle overlooking the bay and have helped to revive the local regatta after a lapse of six years.

Best of all was the return to Tulira where the writer had often stayed as the guest of May, Lady Hemphill, cousin of Edward Martyn and grandmother of the present owner, who is gradually renovating and improving the castle built by the mother of "dear Edward" in the vain hope of his marrying. Though Duras House is being rejuvenated by *An Óige* it is still more comforting to find Tulira lived in by a descendant of Edward Martyn who is married to a descendant of Lady Gregory, and to hear the happy laughter of their three children, Angela, Charles and Marianne ringing round the house in which Mass is still offered in the chapel beloved by Edward Martyn. There is an excellent new play by John Keane called *Many Young Men of Twenty went away*. It is to be hoped that the sons of the few remaining "big houses" in Ireland will stay at home and help to build up the culture and economics of Ireland. Moore Hall is a desolate ruin seen from Lake Cara by Clunee, and Coole is the victim of demolition, although the tree on which Lady Gregory's distinguished guests were vandals enough to carve their initials at her request—Yeats, Willie and Jack, George Bernard Shaw, George Moore, Hugh Lane, W. G. Grace—God and the Men of the Trees forgive them—is still to be seen. But Tulira alone of these three famous houses connected with the Abbey Theatre and the Irish literary movement survives, and it is heartening to realise that Lord Hemphill's children are being taught to sign themselves Martyn Hemphill. *Pietas* in the Roman sense of the word has sometimes been sadly lacking in Ireland, and it is good to find the fighting spirit and family feeling of May, Lady Hemphill, still very much alive in her great-grandson; for May, Lady Hemphill, who died on 28 August 1959, succeeded where Lady Gregory failed, and the fifteenth-century tower in which Mass is still said in old Tullyra Castle is quite a different story from the lonely tower of Yeats at Ballylee. Like the monastery of Monte Cassino, *succisa virescit*.

The new Abbey Theatre is under way at last and Dublin seems to be learning the gentle art of publicity, if one can judge by the harbingers of the Wexford Festival, the Cork Film Festival and the Dublin Theatre Festival. In the world of art the West is very much awake,

and to one who had a small share in the special Irish number of *THE MONTH* in 1957, which contained Lord Moyne's cogent article on the Lane pictures, it was heartening to visit the Municipal Gallery in Dublin where half the collection is now on view. Dublin owes more than she realises to Hugh Lane, Lady Gregory, Professor Tom Bodkin, Lord Moyne and *THE MONTH*, and the controversy waged by these protagonists has brought crowds to the Municipal Gallery who otherwise might never have visited it. It was strange, too, to find an exhibition of International sculpture in the open air in Fitzgerald Park by the Mardyke in Cork: stranger still to hear the lilting accent of the Corkonians as they discussed *The Dying Warrior* and *King and Queen* by Henry Moore. There is still a lively interest in the arts in the race which built Cashel, Clonfert and Clonmacnoise. Would it not be a splendid thing in this Patrician Year if Cashel could be restored to its ancient use by a foundation from Melleray or Glenstal?

WULSTAN PHILLIPSON

REVIEWS

LIFTING UP THE HEART

Prayer, by Hans Urs von Balthasar; translated by A. V. Littledale (Geoffrey Chapman 30s).

FEW THINGS, I know, induce so immediate a discomfort in a reader as does enthusiasm in a reviewer. However, it is a particular distress which must here be borne with as good a grace as the reader can muster because for me to be anything less than rhapsodic about *Prayer* would be a consummate piece of dishonesty. Fr. von Balthasar has simply written the best book on the nature, the need, and the practice of contemplation this century has ever seen nor is imagination able to fancy the future, either distant or near, providing a better.

A number of things have gone to make it so.

Not the least of them is the rare rich texture of von Balthasar's mind. Here is a man whose acquaintance with the historic spiritualities of the Church has been long and intimate. The steady enrichment which resulted from his researches in Origen, Gregory of Nyssa, Maximus Confessor, from his editing of the constitutions of the religious Orders, from his commentaries on St. Thomas, had need of some single expression. *Prayer* is that expression. For it to come to us in what seems to be an English translation of the French version of the German original is rather a pity. Yet the nuanced expressiveness of the biographer of Bernanos and translator of Claudel breaks through in

places. And the mind of the man, opulent as a tapestry, is everywhere in evidence.

Another thing that has gone to make *Prayer* the quite exceptional achievement it is might with propriety be called its accomplished ventriloquism. Through its pages one hears, done to a nicety, the distinctive authoritative accents of voices known to all who are moderately acquainted with the contemporary revival in scriptural, liturgical, and theological studies. But the point I would make is not that tricks are here perpetrated but that truths, their validity thus widely attested, are here provided. The occasional half-truth, as that the forepart of the Mass is preparation for Communion, one is inclined to let benignly pass amid so much that is integrally true.

The great thing, however, is the theology of this book—muscular, agile, its head in the heavens and its feet planted solidly on the ground. All prayer, for the author, must in some sense be contemplative under penalty of not being prayer at all. The prayer of the Christian is essentially response to the unremitting divine initiative, a "hearing of the Word of God" in the Scriptures and in His Son and obeying it. This is so because of the nature of faith. "Faith is twofold: an act and its content or object; it is a holding-as-true and a held-as-true. The two are inseparably conjoined, since the holding-as-true, the disposition to let God's truth and love prevail is the way, indeed the only way, in which we can participate in the content; expressed concretely, it is the grace, contained in God's self-giving to us, of our corresponding gift of self to God." Beheld throughout in such a perspective, the high office of prayer sheds before one's eyes the miasma which generations of chop-logic have served to surround it. Vocal or mental, meditative or mystical, private or liturgical, individual or communal, prayer is one function variously performed. Had the robust theologising of von Balthasar done nothing more than make this one, irrefragably solid point there would be cause for rejoicing in Sion. But it has done more. It has succeeded in resolving all manner of antinomies, real or imagined, encountered in the life of prayer. One could understand readers turning directly to "Polarities and Tensions in Contemplation," the third and final part of the book, where this is effected. One could understand but not commend. For what precedes, particularly on the Christian capacity for contemplation and its triple foundation in Father, Son, and Holy Spirit and on the object of contemplation, is the very stuff of the spiritual life lived largely and well.

Finally, since I must make an end somewhere in this unblushing panegyric of *Prayer*, here is no mere book *about* prayer. Often in a fashion which defies analysis, it is prayer.

ELMER O'BRIEN

FULL CIRCLE

Return to Belief, by Yvonne Lubbock (Collins 21s).

THIS REMARKABLE BOOK is the record of a long search undertaken by one of those who, as its writer says, "feel a need to discover some philosophy that will make sense of their world and according to which they can order their lives." Mrs. Lubbock tells us that, in youth, as a result of school habits, she "went through the motions of a practising Anglican" but that her religion did not make sufficient impact to evoke "either intellectual doubt or genuine faith." Later she drifted into agnosticism "via ill-defined and ill-digested forms of bastard Hinduism and Buddhism." Her initial predicament therefore was typical of numbers of people today who have rejected the Christian religion as too narrow, too dogmatic and too anthropomorphic and looked about for something more "universal" and more intellectually respectable.

Though she describes herself as an "ordinary" person, it is obvious she has a far more acute and inquiring mind and, above all, far more dogged perseverance than the average intelligent man or woman. She is "ordinary" only in the sense that she "had no philosophical training and read only as an amateur." How many "amateurs" would tackle, for the purpose of collating and comparing views on God and immortality, two hundred and fifty works of eastern and western philosophy—including Plato, Aristotle, Descartes, Spinoza, Leibnitz, Hegel and Kant?

Mrs. Lubbock tells us she began her search with no more equipment than an ineradicable conviction (which she was prepared to admit might be purely subjective fantasy) that God existed and an even stronger conviction, based on reason, that he was not the God presented by Christianity. She had, however, a third and more valuable piece of equipment which she does not mention: extreme mental honesty.

Anyone, believer or unbeliever, who reads this book as Professor Basil Willey says, "humbly and receptively," can hardly fail to ask himself some embarrassing questions. Many Catholics might realise, if they answered them frankly, that they had acquired their faith at very little personal expense. They might even begin to wonder uncomfortably how much they would have been prepared to pay for it. Would they have spent twenty years of hard mental labour trying to discover the true purpose of life? Would they have undertaken a fairly thorough investigation of Western philosophy and Eastern religions in the search of the "pearl of great price"? Would they—perhaps an even more probing question—have had the moral courage to renounce their most cherished prejudices and personal inclinations when it was found in the one place the seeker least wanted it to be?

The unbeliever might equally be induced to wonder whether he had not purchased his disbelief on rather too easy terms—at the price of mental laziness, rather than mental honesty. How many agnostics have impartially studied even a few of the suggested answers to the problem of the “why” of human existence before deciding the problem is insoluble? How many atheists deny the existence of God on purely rational and intellectual grounds with no tinge of emotional prejudice? As Mrs. Lubbock convincingly shows, the denial of even the possibility of a supernatural purpose in life is open to the same charge of wishful thinking the sceptic brings against the believer.

It would be impossible to summarise all the different connotations of the word God she found in the philosophers from the pre-Socratics to Hegel. She was surprised to find that word used in some sense by nearly all of them though with a bewildering number of meanings attached to it and by no means always in the same sense by the same philosopher. Descartes shocked her by the dichotomy between his orthodox beliefs which he “accepted without subjecting them to the impotency of reason” and the “mathematician’s God” to which his own inference led him—a deity who seemed to her hardly more than an abstract principle. Yet it was Descartes who first suggested to her that intuition might be an even surer guide to the truth than reasoning and that great thoughts were more often to be found in the poets than in the philosophers. Gradually she came to realise that the approach had to be not merely rational and objective but subjective as well, that reason alone could discover no explanation which satisfied the whole of man’s nature, since reason itself could only argue from premisses and the choice of premisses was in itself subjective. Each philosopher built up his logical edifice on what seemed to him so self-evident as to require no proof, yet since no two agreed on what constituted a self-evident truth their systems remained private constructions, not one of which ever had been or ever could be accepted as universally valid.

One of the most interesting chapters in the book is the one on Hegel. Being totally ignorant of Hegel’s work, I knew nothing of him except that his dialectic consisted of thesis, antithesis and synthesis and that he was the philosopher most revered by the Marxists. Yet it was in reading Hegel’s *Philosophy of Religion* that Mrs. Lubbock realised that “here was the very work which might help me to understand much of what I found meaningless and inexplicable in the Christian religion, that it might bridge the gulf I saw yawning between it and reason.” She discovered to her amazement that Hegel not only accepted the doctrine of the Trinity, but that of the Incarnation. He saw, as she says, that “creation, as a free movement, is an act that is always being done and not one that is performed once and for all. From the Godward side the entire process is an interchange of love, a movement of self-

conscious life. From the human side, this movement in the finite sphere displays all the seriousness and pain and labour and patience of the difference struggling back towards its source. Here are included the creation, the atonement and reconciliation of the universe to God."

Furthermore Hegel showed "how the Church would be the natural flowering on earth of the Spirit in its spiritual community." She was both delighted and horrified, delighted to have found a personal conception of God after all the abstractions, horrified at the attack on the very bases of her disbelief. "If Hegel's interpretation of Christian theology were correct, he was undermining all my reasons for its rejection to which I clung with a passionate and almost pathological intensity." It was at this point she decided it was time to learn "something more . . . of Hinduism and Buddhism and to look into Judaism and Islam. Things were moving too fast in the direction in which I did not want to go."

It was Kierkegaard who, before she had time to begin these investigations, dealt her a far more crushing blow than Hegel. He aroused in her such an agonising inner conflict that she "decided on an armistice—or perhaps it would be truer to say a retreat," and "to get away from this question of the Incarnation—or perhaps even to collect reinforcements," turned to the *Upanishads* and *Bhagavad-gita*.

She was driven back to the conclusion she had least wanted to face—that the truth lay in Christianity after all—worse still, in the Catholic Church, which of all the organised forms of Christianity was the one that repelled her most. To become a Catholic meant sacrificing two things very dear to her. One was "intellectual comfort"—for Kierkegaard had made her see that faith lay in the will, not in the intellect for the human intellect alone could not apprehend truths above it; knowledge was not faith, and what Christ demanded was faith. She must accept or she must reject; there was no comfortable, face-saving compromise. The other was her natural love of solitude and her intense dislike of being part of a community. How she came in the end from a state which was not faith, but only "a cessation of disbelief" to a realisation that conviction is not faith but that God Himself had to bestow it as a grace is one of the best accounts I have ever read of the creature still struggling with its own pride and individualism. With the honesty which makes *Return to Belief* so fascinating a record, Mrs. Lubbock ends with a flatness which anyone who has ever come to the end of any long labour or inner struggle will recognise at once as authentic: "I can give no further account as to the precise moment when conviction took on another quality. I only know that one day I was 'there.' I had arrived on that other side . . . I had no pious feelings, no exaltation; nothing but a sense of surprise at there having been

accomplished in me something that had to be done. As far as I remember, I did not even say 'thank you.'"

Though Mrs. Lubbock disclaims "pretensions to even the most elementary scholarship," she has arranged her book in a most scholarly way, with chapter and verse for every quotation, an index, and, most useful of all, a section of over a hundred pages in which she gives deep extracts from the texts that she studied and some really excellent notes and summaries she made in the course of her reading. This section is really a book in itself; not merely an admirable miniature "digest" of various philosophers and philosophies, but an anthology in which one can study step by step the various clues she found helpful in her search. I suggest that this is definitely a book to buy, not to borrow, and to return to over and over again not merely as a handy textbook for the "amateur" of comparative philosophy but as something rarer and more profound—a book in which a Catholic may find deeper aspects of his faith on which to meditate. It may make him set out on his own voyage of discovery—the discovery perhaps of his ignorance of the riches he possesses and the inadequate way he uses them both for himself and for others.

ANTONIA WHITE

ZOROASTRIANISM

The Dawn and Twilight of Zoroastrianism, by R. C. Zaehner (Weidenfeld and Nicholson, History of Religion Series, 50s).

THOUGH THE TRIBUTE has been staled to a reviewer's cliché, it is but the simple truth to say that Professor Zaehner's book is the classical and indispensable English authority on its subject. Owing to particular obstacles explained by the author: lacunae in our sources, the fragmentary state of the Zoroastrian Scripture, the Avesta, the extreme difficulty of interpreting the language in which the oldest portions are written, Zoroastrianism is the least known of all the historic religions. Professor Zaehner, a specialist in Iranian studies, with a knowledge of Pahlavi, the language of translations of the Avesta and commentaries upon it, certainly exceeded, probably equalled by no other English orientalist, has given us an authoritative account of Zoroastrian religion. He shows us Zoroaster, as he points out, the sole prophet of Aryan stock, transforming a naturalist polytheism closely related to that of the Indian Rig Veda into a monotheism for which Ahura Mazda the wise lord—identical it would seem with the Indian Varuna—creates the world *ex nihilo*. His enemy the Destructive Spirit Angra Mainyu (Ahriman) is not, as in later Zoroastrianism, a co-eternal principle of evil, but, like the devil, a created spirit who has chosen evil. The man who obeys Ahura's law will be

saved, the sinner damned. There will be a final resurrection of the body, for Zoroastrianism, like Judaism and Christianity, does not oppose body to soul or unduly separate them, and everlasting bliss in a world free from evil.

Zoroaster, and on this point the author claims a consensus of scholars, was born in the seventh century B.C., converted a monarch in Eastern Iran in 588. He has left a number of hymns, the Gathas contained in the Avesta, from which we may discover his genuine teaching. As Professor Zaehner points out, Zoroaster's eschatology is substantially the same as that which appears in the latest books of the Old Testament, after the Jews had come under Persian rule, and, as professed by the Pharisees, sanctioned by Our Lord. Indeed, the doctrine of the Qumran Essenes and the Fourth Gospel, in its emphasis on the dualism of truth and falsehood, light and darkness is strikingly Zoroastrian in tone and even language. Though Professor Zaehner is decisive as to the Zoroastrian derivation of the doctrine of a morally determined after-life of bliss or woe, he seems less certain as regards the resurrection of the body. In one place he opines that the agreement may not be a borrowing but an independent conclusion from a common belief in the body as an integral constituent of man, in another he accepts without question the Zoroastrian derivation. What he does not explain is the long time lag of some three centuries between the first Jewish contacts with Persia and the new eschatology. Did the struggle with Hellenism first win sympathetic attention for Iranian monotheism, in many respects akin to the monotheism of the Jews? In any case we may agree with Professor Zaehner that Zoroaster was indeed a prophet called by God to be a precursor of the Christian revelation, what is true in his doctrine surviving in Christianity.

This in fact, as the sequel of this book proves, was the permanent fruit of Zoroastrianism. Not only has the Church of the Good Doctrine been reduced to a small community of Parsees mostly around Bombay who, moreover, are succumbing to modern secularism, but the religion itself, practically from Zoroaster's death, has been adulterated with elements foreign to his teaching so that the latter has been changed, in many respects for the worse. Under the Achaemenian kings, Zoroastrianism was the official religion of the Persian empire. But it was contaminated by the polytheism Zoroaster had been unable to suppress. Gods and goddesses of the old Indo-Iranian stock, Mithra for example and Anahita, though still created by Ahura Mazda are accorded divine worship, even by Ahura himself. The Avesta contains a series of hymns in their honour, the Yashts—unpopular with the later Zoroastrians. Roman Mithraism is traced by the author to an Iranian cultus condemned by the prophet and never admitted to his religion. Indeed, Ahriman was actually worshipped as a Mithraic god.

Under the Achaemenians the Zoroastrian priestly caste, the Magi, became the official guardians and interpreters of their religion and its liturgical ministers, though even Professor Zaehner is unable to remove our ignorance of their origin.

Alexander's defeat of Darius ended what the author terms the Dawn of Zoroastrianism and introduced a period of obscurity under Greek and Parthian rulers. It was not until the third century of our era that a second Persian dynasty, the Sassanians, once more made Zoroastrianism the official creed of their kingdom, Professor Zaehner's "Twilight" and whereas the Achaemenians had by and large been remarkably tolerant of divergent creeds and cults, the Sassanian rulers attempted to enforce the orthodoxy they favoured. The religion of this period was no longer polytheist. On the other hand it taught a radical dualism incompatible with true monotheism. For Ahriman is no longer Ormazd's (Ahura Mazda's) apostate creature but a being substantially evil, co-eternal with Ormazd and in the early stages of their conflict even victorious over him, though his native stupidity pronounces his final doom. Moreover, the world is parcelled out between good creatures, the work of Ormazd, and evil creatures, the work of Ahriman, a division mainly determined by the interests of farmers. Henceforward conflicting theological schools disputed the mythology and explanation of the dualism of good and evil. The orthodox dualism was contested by schools of Zurvanism, on which the author has already given us an exhaustive monograph. Zurvanism affirmed absolute time, Zurvan, as the absolute and ultimate reality. Two of these schools regarded Zurvan as the parent alike of Ormazd and Ahriman. A third school, however, was frankly materialist, denying the existence of any spiritual deity, the universe being an autonomous development of Zurvan, a species, as the author points out, of dialectical materialism. In the later Zoroastrian books, mythology, fantastic, often grotesque, expressed an entirely serious consideration of the problem of evil in God's creation.

The final damnation of the wicked taught by Zoroaster is now replaced by the ultimate salvation of all men, though the wicked must endure a final torment of molten metal.

Of particular interest is the ethic of this Zoroastrian twilight, the adoption of Aristotle's ethic of the mean as being the wisdom of the good Zoroastrian, the mean in particular between unrestrained hedonism and asceticism. It is a mean which Professor Zaehner finds particularly sympathetic and, although his sympathy is difficult to reconcile with the teaching and practice of Catholic saints, it can find support from the liturgy with its insistence on the value of physical health and a poverty such as the Holy Family's which is far from destitution—the "frugal" comfort in fact required by Leo XIII.

Moreover the Aristotelian mean is the backbone of Thomist ethics which *in this respect* approximates to the Zoroastrian.

This review can do but scant justice to the work it reviews, but it may, I hope, serve to call attention to an outstanding contribution to the literature of comparative religion.

A few final comments: was not Zoroaster's special regard for the ox derived from the same source as the sanctity of cows in Hinduism?

The quotation from the Menok-i-Khrat (290) on Wisdom as Ormazd's agent in the work of creation resembles closely the eulogy of Wisdom in Proverbs (Chapter VIII)—though in this case the resemblance must be coincidence.

Professor Zachner should not describe Felicity and Perpetua as obscure saints. No early martyrdoms are better known than theirs.

E. I. WATKIN

ANCIENT POETRY AND MODERN CRITICISM

Symbol and Myth in Ancient Poetry, by Herbert Musurillo S.J. (Fordham University Press \$5.00).

THIS INTERESTING and valuable survey is significant far beyond its modestly stated aim. The traditional privilege accorded to the Classics in Britain's educational structure inevitably continues to be undermined. Compulsory Latin for Cambridge entry is voted down; in the new universities, Latin and Greek are discards. With English literature the focal centre of humanistic studies, the Greek and Latin poets—chiefly of interest as prolegomena—will be analysed increasingly by the criteria of modern criticism. A straw in the wind is the widely-discussed article "The Classics and their Critics" in *Essays in Criticism* (April 1961), in which Mr. J. P. Sullivan castigates Wight-Duff and Rose for woolly and at times meaningless comment on the Roman poets.

Fr. Musurillo here threads his way over virgin territory. He is well-known to Classicists here for his distinguished editing of the *Acts of the Pagan Martyrs*—hardly an orthodox preparation for this type of literary study, but welcome evidence of the solid foundation of learning which many *littérateurs* lack. In a useful introductory chapter, "The Criticism of Ancient Literature," he provides sign-posting to critical methods under the headings of "Persona et Vox," "Scaena," "Sense," "Feeling and Tone," "Imagery," and "Mythology." There is also discerning comment on the besetting sin of ancient critics—the tendency to equate poetry with rhetoric. This is a large problem, not least because Roman poets composed poetry with this equation pre-assumed; and T. R. Henn's study, *Longinus and English Criticism*, suggests that the differences between the ancient and the modern approach can be exaggerated. Fr. Musurillo suggests as a fundamental

distinction that "the heart of poetry is metaphor"; I would personally have welcomed an elaboration of this discussion, which is fundamental for all the major Roman poets.

The kernel of the book is an investigation of one strand—the artistic function of imagery in the Classical poets. There is a highly suggestive chapter on Aeschylus and on Sophocles, whose seven extant plays are submitted to detailed analysis. Horace is the other poet to receive close investigation; and here I must confess to scepticism at some points. I find the suggestion that Soracte "by natural metonymy" represents "the chill of life's uncertainty" quite probable; but to propose that *fons Bandusiae* is symbolically transformed into an "objective animistic force, intimately connected with Horace's own powers of poetic contemplation," is highly subjective. This chapter would also have benefited from an initial discussion on how seriously the *Satires* and *Epistles* are to be regarded as poetic compositions.

This type of enquiry thrives on dialogue and disagreement which is why so many traditionalists in the Classical field find it so disconcerting. When the author, adopting a thesis of Gilbert Highet, claims that the *motif* of emasculation in the "Attis" poem of Catullus reflects "the conflict of Lesbia again revealed under a new aspect," one's initial reaction is utter doubt. Did not the theme fascinate a whole series of poets, Alexandrian and Roman? Was not Havelock right to throw doubt on biographical interpretation of this type in the complete absence of secure dating? And therefore is not the *literary* motivation a more fruitful line of enquiry? Yet the initiation of this dialogue, precisely because it directs analysis towards a feeling of human interest and literary value, gives the poem a more immediate relevance and interest than does learned exposition of sources and religious background.

There are a few minor misprints in English and Latin, but the publishers are to be congratulated on the standard of production, which is worthy of this useful and provocative book.

P. G. WALSH

FÉNELON AND THE BIBLE

Fénelon et la Bible, by Bernard Dupriez (Bloud et Gay, Paris 120 NF).

THIS WORK is a detailed and scholarly examination by a Professor of Montreal University of the influence upon Fénelon of the Bible and the use he made of it in his various writings. No readers of Fénelon's *Letters* can fail to be impressed by the number and diversity of the texts drawn from Old and New Testaments alike, with which he was accustomed to reinforce the advice given to those to whom the letters are addressed. Another thing which must strike the modern

reader of devotional literature as odd is the scarcity of references to either Our Lady or to the saints. Such references do occur of course but are all the more remarkable in that they occur so seldom. As regards saints, apart from St. Augustine, on whose writings he draws freely, and St. Louis whom, naturally, he holds up as a model to his royal pupil, he hardly mentions any others except St. François de Sales and St. John the Baptist whom he evidently held in special devotion.

Fénelon, as Professor Dupriez points out, and as indeed one might expect to find in a seventeenth-century churchman, was an accomplished Latinist. He spoke the language fluently, was well acquainted with the classics (quotations from Horace and Virgil occur here and there in the *Letters*); he translated several of La Fontaine's Fables into Latin, and that he was equally master of the scholastic tongue is shown by his various *Dissertationes* as well as his correspondence with the Court of Rome at the height of the Quietist controversy. On the other hand he appears to have known little Greek and, unlike his rival Bossuet, no Hebrew.

It was in 1686, the year after the Revocation of the Edict of Nantes, when relations between Catholics and Huguenots were at their worst, that Fénelon was sent to the Saintonge region to endeavour to persuade dissidents, and not least those who had conformed outwardly for fear of persecution, to return to the true faith. He would appear, in all the circumstances, to have been remarkably successful in carrying out so delicate a task; and not the least important factor contributing to that success was his knowledge of Scripture. "What is needed in this sort of work," he wrote, "are preachers who will expound every Sunday a text from the Gospel *avec une autorité douce et insinuante*." The advice is wholly characteristic, and it was in fact upon Gospel texts that his presentation of the Church's claims were ever based. Fénelon's subtle and reasonable methods of dealing with heresy were, it need hardly be said, completely opposed to those favoured at that time by the French hierarchy and the monarch, and two further glimpses of them that we have go a long way to explain the suspicion with which he was regarded by the more rigidly orthodox, but, let it not be forgotten, never by Rome. Some of Fénelon's converted Huguenots asked that they might be allowed to continue to sing the Psalms in French. They had been accustomed to sing paraphrased versions of the Psalms in verse to tunes written for them by composers such as Louis Bourgeois and Claude Goudinel. Fénelon saw no objection provided the singing took place either "before Mass or after Vespers," for, as he said, it would be a consolation to them and would help to bring the two sides together. The King, however, would not hear of it and the matter was dropped. The second case is

connected with the *Traité du Ministère des Pasteurs*. This work was especially addressed to the Huguenots and he makes use for his quotations of a Geneva version of the Bible, giving as his reason for so doing "because its familiarity in Protestant ears makes it more acceptable and less suspect." Professor Dupriez notes that whenever Fénelon quotes from the Vulgate his quotations are always strictly accurate whereas in making the same quotations in French he is apt to be less so. For instance, he quotes the Words from the Cross in Matth. 27, v. 46 eight times and every time with slight variations. From this one may deduce that whereas he knew the Latin version by heart, when it came to giving a text in French he relied mainly on his own translation. It is amusing to see the Latin purist—not to mention the pedagogue—revealed here and there by slight corrections to the Vulgate text: *Exite de illa, populus meus* (Apoc. 18, v. 4) is altered, for instance, to the vocative *popule meus*, while *quiescite agere perverse* (Is. 1, v. 16) is turned more elegantly into *quiescite perverse agere*. It is perhaps not surprising that there are twice as many quotations from the New Testament as from the Old. In the Old Testament the sources most frequently drawn upon are the books of Genesis, the Kings, the Psalms, Esther, Job and especially Isaias. In the New Testament St. Matthew is the main source and one text (16, v. 24), "If any man will come after me let him deny himself and take up his cross and follow me," is quoted no less than seventy times.

In later chapters various of the cardinal points of Fénelon's teaching are dealt with, among others the quality of *petitesse* upon the importance of which he was never tired of insisting. One quotation will suffice to show the meaning he attached to this particular aspect of the Christian life: *Ce n'est pas assez de se détacher, il faut s'apetisser. En se détachant on ne renonce qu'aux choses extérieures; en s'apetissant on renonce à soi.*

Lastly, in a pamphlet entitled *Letter to the Bishop of Arras on the Reading of the Bible in the Vulgar Tongue*, Fénelon sets forth his view on a subject which, not least in his day, was the cause of much uncertainty and dispute. He begins by pointing out how, even in the earliest days, when there was no language barrier to prevent the faithful from reading the Scriptures, the Church had made it abundantly clear that she alone was entitled to interpret the meaning of what they read. It was because of the heresies which arose from unauthorised individual interpretations that in later times restrictions were placed upon such reading. Here for instance, Fénelon says, in my own archdiocese of Cambrai, owing to the prevalence of Protestantism, permission to read the Bible in French has only been given for the past century to such as are sufficiently well prepared, spiritually speaking, to digest it. But, he goes on, granted that such be the case it is all the more

important for us to work unceasingly to see that as many as possible do become so prepared. After citing a number of passages in both Old and New Testaments which afford difficulties to those who approach them without guidance he says to the Bishop, with a touch of humour, that if many a pious book, such as, for example, the *Imitation*, contained even one hundredth part of the difficulties which abound in the Bible he would think it his duty to forbid the use of it in his Lordship's diocese. And he sums up the matter thus: "Following the rule of St. Augustine it is for us to pass over what we cannot understand and to seek edification in whatever we can."

JOHN McEWEN

QUMRAN AND CHRISTIANITY

The Scrolls and Christian Origins: Studies in the Jewish Background of the New Testament, by Matthew Black (Nelson 25s).

"THE VIEW is crystallising among scholars that it is from this side of Judaism that Christianity took its origins." Professor Black thus ranges himself with those who see in the New Testament more affinities with the "Essenes of Qumran" than with any other form of Jewish religion.

Even those who are timorous about how the uniqueness of Christianity will stand up against new discoveries may face such statements with equanimity. Firstly, because the "origins" in question, as we shall see, do not impinge on the central and essential Christian novelty. Then, as Professor Black will tell us, almost all points of contact are clouded with uncertainty. Finally, the scrolls may touch Christianity only where they touch Judaism in general. They are in fact the only Jewish documents, in their original form, dating from the years of the birth of Christianity. Our other main testimonies to Jewish religion, the rabbinical traditions, are more or less idealisations of past memories when they touch religion as it was before the fall of Jerusalem in A.D. 70. Since Christianity started among the Jews, *any* authentic documents of the critical period are almost bound to throw up more features of resemblance than the post-Christian *rabbinica*. There is therefore no guarantee that the new likenesses, revealed in the scrolls, could not be paralleled in other branches of Judaism, if we had their records in unadulterated form. We take one example of this latter from Professor Black. He sees, rightly, in the Hymns from Qumran a sort of "evangelical piety" (sinfulness of man, mercy of God), so like St. Paul's that he can call it "justification by faith alone." The Qumranites are seen as the Presbyterians of Palestine, over against whom stood Jerusalem like the Catholic Church.

Having brought out the full force of the piety of the Hymns, Professor Black then adds a corrective. "There is nothing specifically

sectarian about them; they spring from the prophetic tradition of Israel." The same, he says, is true of the other main point of doctrine which he brings up as a close parallel to the Gospels: that the Essenes lived their lives as "true witnesses to judgment, and the chosen of grace to atone for the land" (from the *Manual of Discipline*). Qumran was therefore not the only group of Jews who considered austerity and martyrdom to be a form of expiation. Thus, as he goes along, Professor Black adds restrictions to his initial *credo*. Indeed, his dispassionate criticisms of his own favoured positions are among the most admirable features of his careful book.

On this rather central point of expiation, I would like to press farther Professor Black's own criticisms. There are echoes of the Suffering Servant of Isaiah 53 in the scrolls. Professor Black notes some differences. Expiation is for Israel only, not for the Gentiles. It is a *community* which expiates. Does this underline enough the crucial difference, that only in Christianity is there a *Messiah* who dies for the sins of the world? The expiatory power of suffering in general was almost a commonplace: the suffering Messiah was a new world. But I would go farther, and question even the radical association of Qumran with the Suffering Servant of Isaiah. We remember that his distinctive note was not merely that he suffered, but that he prayed for his persecutors. That is a radical change, missing entirely from Qumran. When one breaks off the quotation from the *Manual* at "the chosen of grace to atone for the land," one may perhaps give a false idea of their piety. The full quotation is: "to atone for the land, and to render to the wicked their deserts." Now this has a full, close parallel in an Old Testament context quite different to the Isaian Servant, namely, in Deuteronomy 32: 43, "To take vengeance on his adversaries, and make expiation for the land of his people." Qumran, far from praying for its persecutors breathed vengeance on them as it thought of—purifying the land from the stains of their sins! The whole theology may be at a very distant remove from the Gospels.

We said above that contacts between Qumran and Christianity do not cover essentials. To confine ourselves to some basic items: the proclamation of the "Kingdom of God," of the "Son of Man," are admittedly (even among the most radical critics) characteristic of the Gospels. Neither term (which is most important), much less the New Testament content, occur at all at Qumran. We also said that such points of contact as are discussed by Professor Black are almost swamped by the sound of a great "Perhaps." His chief suggestions include virginity (he denies "evangelical poverty" at Qumran), baptism, a sacred meal, an apocalyptic Messiah.

The whole discussion of celibacy has to be concerned with the Jewish writers, Philo and Josephus, and the Roman Pliny. The scrolls

themselves, as Professor Black sees, neither testify to celibacy or imply it. (The only evidence to the contrary has been ably given by Fr. Sutcliffe, S.J., in his admirable *Monks of Qumran*.) Now Professor Black can say that "the invaluable Qumran evidence shows how unreal and even distorted this (Philo, Josephus) picture of the sect was." One wonders why he does not apply this to their romance of Essene celibacy? The Egyptian Therapeutae of Philo, who come constantly into the discussion of the Essenes, seemed to the great scholar Lagrange to be a figment of Philo's imagination. The scrolls do nothing to vitiate Lagrange's view. One only asks that when scholars talk of the Essenes, they would be only half as sceptical about Philo and Josephus, as they can be, say, about the theological tendencies of the Acts of the Apostles.

So many scholars, like H. H. Rowley, have quarrelled vigorously, and to my mind effectively, with the notion of baptism and a sacred meal at Qumran, that it is enough to remind readers of the trenchant criticisms which Fr. Sutcliffe offers in his book. To conclude, the last point, about an "apocalyptic Messiah," becomes less than tenuous when one recalls that most scholars find no mention of the Messiah at all in the relevant document, the *War Scroll*, and refer the questionable passage, not to the Messiah, but to God himself.

Professor Black's book is scholarly to the point of ranging into regions where few readers will be equipped to follow him. But he remains clear, detached and comprehensive. If his conclusions do not all recommend themselves, this is partly due to the ambiguous nature of the evidence. One is grateful that he has given the maximum of resemblances with the minimum of over-assurance.

KEVIN SMYTH

EARLY CELTIC CHURCH

The Age of the Saints in the Early Celtic Church, by N. K. Chadwick
(Published for the University of Durham by Oxford University Press 12s 6d).

MRS. CHADWICK'S THEME in her absorbing Riddell Lecture might be summed up as "the background of the Synod of Whitby." When continental Christianity returned to Britain in 597, the Celtic west and north, together with Ireland, were Christian already in their way and had long been so. During the seventh century the Celtic monks of Iona evangelised the northern Angles. At Whitby in 663 a direct clash developed, after which the Celts moved slowly into conformity with Rome.

But why the clash? Nominally over questions of discipline, the chief being the shape of the tonsure and the method of calculating Easter. These matters were associated with cryptic references to

Simon Magus and the Apostle John; doubtless they were symbols, tokens of obedience or rebellion, rather than the essential issues. The problem is what precisely lay behind. The Celtic Church was "different," there was a Something Else about it. But what?

Mrs. Chadwick steers adroitly and eruditely between contrary errors. She dismisses the myth that the Celtic Church was schismatic or proto-Protestant. "It was completely orthodox." However, she does not pretend that the controversy actually was a mere disciplinary quarrel. She argues that as a church of "saints"—monks, ascetics, scholars and pilgrims, apostles of Enlightenment—the Celtic Christian body was really and profoundly contrasted with the more rigid hierarchical system prevailing elsewhere.

She suggests (a fascinating theory) that the monasticism which spread from Egypt in the fourth century, and was at first an almost unmanageable intrusion into the Roman scheme, reached southern Ireland via Gaul and Spain independently of St. Patrick. Patrick's mission, indeed, may have been in part a retort to its influence—as such, not very successful. On this showing Celtic Christianity had an unruly mystical ancestry in the Orient; and it was given substance, not only by the holiness of its teachers, but by the monastic literary tradition, which had idiosyncrasies of its own. Mrs. Chadwick shows that monks were active scholars and writers long before St. Benedict. In Ireland, this literary tradition came into contact with the immense treasury of native lore. Instead of trying to suppress or censor their pagan inheritance, many Irish monks tried to digest it: hence their joyous preservation of pre-Christian myth and magic in such compilations as the *Cin Droma Snechtai*. Inevitably the results tended to be . . . odd. Not heretical, but odd. One thinks of such extravagances as the Irish poems which apparently salute St. Brigit as a reincarnation of the Blessed Virgin.

At Whitby, the Celtic spokesmen were making a stand for what they conceived as a freer life, a more daring spirituality, a more spontaneous insight. With that stand went an almost patriotic flowering of the peculiar Celtic culture. "Much of the best Early Irish literature was inspired directly or indirectly by the Paschal controversy."

Some of the ideas in this book are open to dispute—for example, that St. Patrick came from the north rather than the west. Occasionally, again, one could wish for a fuller explanation. When the lecturer says in passing that "the bishop of Rome, before the establishment of the papacy, possessed no technical authority," I am sure she intends a valid distinction, but I do not know what it is. However, such difficulties are few. It is delightful to find, at last, such sound documentation for a view which some of us have long felt to be correct.

GEOFFREY ASHE

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